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THE FORTY SHIRES

THEIR

History, Scenery, Arts, and Legends.

BY

CHARLOTTE M. MASON.

WITH TWENTY-ONE ILLUSTRATIONS.

Second Edition.

LONDON:
HATCHARDS, PICCADILLY.
1882.

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PREFACE.

THE writer ventures to hope the following pages may help to acquaint English children with their native land in the only way in which England can be practically known — county by county. Happily, our country has not been cut up into governmental departments; we have still the ancient divisions — the Forty Shires — each curiously individual in its aspect, history, and employments; and it is in his acquaintance with the distinctive interests of various counties that an educated person's knowledge of the geography of England appears.

This little book is an attempt to make conceptions of the scenery, the labours, and the associations of the several Shires, real and familiar to young readers.

An effort is made to awaken intelligent interest in the chief crafts by which English people live.

Perhaps the notices of great men, or of noble deeds, which belong to almost every county, may

stimulate patriotic feeling, and a sense that, on the whole, England is great, because righteousness exalteth a nation.

The physical geography of the country is taken up as 'common information,' without the 'precision of statement' which belongs to scientific teaching; it is hoped that the data thus gathered may serve as a basis for such teaching.

Thus, although this is not a text-book, but is designed for pleasant holiday reading, the writer hopes it may prove to have a certain educational value.

It is most desirable that the book should be read with good maps; it will be seen that a topographical order has been preserved, though the readings are arranged with a view to variety.

It is matter of regret that, for want of space, much matter is left out, fully as interesting and important as that which appears.

The authorities consulted, and the sources from which information has been derived, are too numerous for the writer to do more than make here a general grateful acknowledgment.

C. M. M.

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THE FORTY SHIRES.

NORTHUMBERLAND AND DURHAM.

I.—THE BORDER.

THESE two northern counties—both marked by hill and dale, both rich in coal and lead, both with many busy ports on their eastern coast—have, also, much of their history in common. Northumberland is a border county, and Durham has shared with it in the fortunes of war. A 'Border County' means nothing now because, for nearly three centuries Scotland has been under the same sovereign as England.

Not that Scotland was ever conquered by England; it so happened, that James VI. of Scotland was the person most nearly related to our Queen Elizabeth at the close of her life; therefore, after her death, he reigned as king both of England and Scotland. Since then the two countries have had one sovereign, and have been, for the most part, at peace.

But before that time, if you had been a borderer, that is, had lived in a border county on either side of the Cheviots, you might, any night, have had your cattle and growing crops carried off, and your house burnt over your head.

Three of our kings, the first three Edwards, carried on a long war with Scotland, which they hoped to conquer and add to the English crown. They did not succeed ; but for more than two hundred years after it had ceased, this war led to constant feuds between the two countries.

In the first place, Scotland was never sure but some other English king would covet the Scottish crown ; therefore she always tried to secure France as her friend, that if the English king should invade Scotland, France would come to her aid. The consequence of this alliance was, that Scotland had to go to war with England far more often in the quarrels of France than in her own.

In the second place, the great border families, English and Scotch, learned to hate one another, and to be always seeking cause for quarrels ; and as the Scotch Douglases, and the English Percies, Earls of Northumberland, were both great barons, with many noble friends and many thousand followers, a quarrel between the two families would lead, at any time, to a general war. Thus, while our Edward III. was fighting his French battles, David of Scotland thought he could help France by marching down into England, and perhaps conquering the country while the king was absent. He marched through Northumber-

land and Cumberland, burning and slaying as he went. But everybody was not at the wars. The brave Queen Philippa, and the lords Percy and Neville, helped by three or four bishops, raised the people of the north, and a great fight took place on some hills close by the city of Durham. The Scots were beaten, and King David was taken prisoner (1346) ; a beautiful cross, named after the Lord Neville, was built on the spot in memory of the fight, which has since been known as the Battle of Neville's Cross. The beautiful cross has been destroyed, and a rude pillar stands in its place.

In 1388 was fought the Battle of Otterburn, or 'Chevy Chase:'—

'This fight did last from break of day
Till setting of the sun ;
For when they rung the evening bell,
The battle scarce was done.

'Of fifteen hundred Englishmen,
Went home but fifty-tree ;
The rest in Chevy Chase were slain,
Under the greenwood tree.'

Old Ballad.

Otterburn stands in the pleasant valley of the Rede ; Humbledown Hill, where, twenty years after Chevy Chase (1402), Earl Percy's death was avenged, is among the bleak moors in the north of Northumberland. We must speak of one more terrible border-

fight which took place upon Flodden Field, near the Cheviots.

It was in the reign of the eighth King Henry (1513): England was at war with France; and James of Scotland, to help his ally, the King of France, gathered all the best men of his kingdom; 50,000 crossed the Tweed, and laid waste Northumberland all about the river.

The King of England sent a much smaller army to meet him, under the Earl of Surrey. The armies met at Flodden, and the fight lasted until it grew too dark for the men to see one another. Nobody knew that night which side had gained the victory; but the next day was a day of heavy mourning for Scotland; the 'Flowers of the Forest,' the bravest and noblest of her sons, lay by hundreds dead upon the field; and, amongst the rest, the young king.

It is, indeed, a good thing for both countries that Scotland and England are now united under one crown: even in the earliest days of English history, when the Romans ruled, the Picts—the savage tribes who inhabited Scotland—were constantly breaking over the border. Agricola, the Roman general who finally conquered Britain, built eighteen forts or towers, between the Solway Firth and the Tyne, that the Roman soldiers who manned them might keep the barbarians back. A later emperor, Hadrian, built a stone wall, nearly in the same place; a great wall—parts of which are still to be seen—a hundred miles long, and nearly wide enough for a carriage to be driven along the top.

The Border Land, this 'Debateable Land,' where the 'rank reivers and moss-troopers' used to gallop over moss and moorland, is now marked by the richest meadows, the fairest fields. The track which used to lie between the two countries—a blasted and desolate region, ravaged with fire and sword, drenched with blood, and peopled only with horrible memories—is now turned into a garden. Large corn-farms extend up to the very ridges of the Cheviots.'

There is still a pine-wood on Flodden-ridge where King James and his brave Scots rested before the fatal battle, but the field of 'red Flodden' itself is marked off by hedges, its heather has given place to corn, and there is little in the aspect of the country to remind us—

> 'Of the stern strife and carnage drear
> Of Flodden's fatal field.'

II.—THE DALES AND VALES.

Both these counties are mountainous in the west: the Cheviot Hills are in Northumberland, and divide it from Scotland. They are a range of moorland hills, cold and bare, except for peat and heather, and the short turf of the lower hills which feeds the nimble Cheviot sheep. Here and there, rather high, pointed peaks rise above the rest, as Cheviot Top, Carter Fell, and Peel Fell.

The hills of Durham are the Pennines, the great central moorland chain which begins at the Cheviots, ends at the Peak, in Derbyshire, and divides the rivers

that flow east from those that flow west in all the northern counties—the *watershed* of the north. These hills, too, are just high wild moorlands, with deep bogs, patches of heather, and great crags scattered about, where scarcely any plant taller than the low-growing mountain-bilberry is to be seen, though sheep, and even cows, feed on the short grass of the slopes.

The most desolate part of this moorland country is where the four counties of Northumberland, Cumberland, Durham, and Yorkshire, almost join. Here, at Coalcleugh—the highest village in England—at Allendale, Allenhead, and other villages in Northumberland; at St. John's, in the dale of the Wear, at Middleton and Eggleston, in that of Tees, and at other villages in Durham, the steady, kindly lead-miners have their homes.

This is the great lead-mining country, where veins of lead-ore run in the mountain limestone. These western mountains send out spurs towards the east; three or four in Northumberland, two great spurs in Durham: spurs which look as if the land swelled up into high ridges or waves of rugged moorland, leaving deep valleys between them. The moors get higher and more bare towards the west; they are generally let out to farmers for sheep-pastures, and are divided into patches by rough stone walls.

Towards the west, where the mountains are high, there are beautiful dales between the spurs, like those in Yorkshire; dales where mountain streams roar over their stony beds, and cut their way through rocky glens, or among deep woods, which open suddenly

into quite broad green valleys shut in by the moors. By-and-by the rivers, grown wide and full with the waters of many streams, leave their narrow, picturesque dales, and flow through the open valleys, beautiful, too, across the country to the sea. Useful rivers they are, bordered by green pastures, where the short-horned Durham ox feeds, a broad thick beast, fattest of any that make Christmas beef for the markets. The northern farmers know how to make the best of their land, and the valleys are spread with corn-fields —wheat, and, further to the north, barley and oats. The low land by the coast does best for potatoes and turnips.

In the east, from the Coquet in Northumberland to the south of Durham, is the coal-field, where all the mining villages are, and where there is the smoke of many blast-furnaces, for iron as well as coal is found.

The bonny rivers of Northumberland, the Aln, the Coquet, and the Tyne, all flow in pretty much the same direction towards the sea. The Tweed, which is partly a Scotch river, divides Northumberland from Scotland on the north, as the Tyne divides it from Durham on the south.

The Tweed has Berwick at its mouth—a town to which many a tale of border warfare belongs. It is a trading town now, and a fishing town, for the Tweed, like all the Northumbrian rivers, is famous for its fish —splendid salmon and trout.

Alnwick is the chief town on the Aln. Five times did the Scots lay siege to it in as many centuries. The old castle, which belongs to the Dukes of Nor-

thumberland, could tell of many attacks on its thick, strong walls, and of brave deeds done in its defence.

The Coquet has Warkworth, a busy little port, at its mouth ; Coquet Island, with its lighthouse, lies off the coast.

The Wansbeck flows nearly round Morpeth, a busy town, where iron farm-implements are made—ploughs, harrows, flails ; leather is tanned here, also, and flannel woven.

The Tyne is the chief river of Northumberland ; it is formed by two streams, North Tyne and South Tyne, each of which flows through its own beautiful dale. The two join above the old town of Hexham, where a battle was fought in a war we have not yet spoken of.

Towards Newcastle, the Tyne becomes a busy river ; its bed has been deepened thence to the sea. Along the sides of the river are shipbuilding-yards ; and factories and stores are crowded on its banks. Newcastle is an important port, which sends coal, iron goods and lead, with glass bottles, and other things made in the town, to the countries about the Baltic, to the Mediterranean, and to America ; getting, in return, timber, pitch, and tar from the Baltic ; sugar and tobacco from America ; fruits and wines from the Mediterranean. Newcastle is a handsome town, built of freestone ; an old town of which many stories might be told. It is joined by bridges to Gateshead, on the opposite side of the Tyne.

Tynemouth, North Shields, and South Shields,

are all trading towns: close to South Shields is Jarrow.

Gateshead, Jarrow, and South Shields, are in Durham, being south of the Tyne. Sunderland, at the mouth of the Wear, is the principal port of Durham, and the largest town in the county; it is a ship-building and coal-shipping place. Bishop Wearmouth and Monk Wearmouth both join Sunderland, and make, with it, one large town. Monk Wearmouth is named from the monks who at one time dwelt at the mouth of the Wear. Further up the river is Chester-le-Street, where, in Alfred's days, monks and bishop came to live when the Danes drove them out of Lindisfarne.

Going up the river, we row nearly round the city of Durham; close by it is Neville's Cross. Shortly after passing Bishop Auckland we get into Weardale, and among the lead-works.

The winding Tees divides Durham from Yorkshire. High up in Tees-dale, the waters come tumbling over a ridge of rocks all in a white foam; then the river flows on for a bit in a deep, rocky bed, until, just above Middleton, the rock breaks off in a great cliff, sixty feet high; there is nothing for the river but to pour down this wall of rock and find itself a bed at the bottom: so down it comes, with a rush and a roar to be heard from afar—the waters in a white froth, and the air, filled with spray, which shows all colours in the sun, like a rainbow. You stand until you grow giddy watching the waters tumbling down, down, with a ceaseless roar. 'Surely,' you think, 'all must be

emptied out, presently, and the fall must stop;' but no; the water-fall goes on for ever, pouring an endless stream down the face of the rock. This Tees water-fall is called High Force. *Force* is the north-country name for a waterfall.

The river forces its way onward—

> 'Condemned to mine a channelled way
> O'er solid sheets of marble grey.'

And these grey rocks often rise in high and broken cliffs on each side, with trees growing in every niche, and bending from the top. Tees-dale is, truly, very beautiful.

The river passes by Darlington, where there are the tall chimneys of wool and flax mills, and of iron-works. Stockton stands by the wide mouth of Tees; it, also, is a ship-building and coaling place, yet it is a bright, handsome town, standing in a fertile district.

III.—THE COAL-FIELD.

What should we do without coal? We cook, we travel, we light our streets and our rooms, we work our great mills, and warm our houses, all by means of coal. Countries where there are still large forests and few people may manage as England did before the use of this underground treasure was discovered; but we should fare badly if our great towns had to be warmed and lighted, and our great works carried on, with no fuel but the wood of the few trees which are left in England.

There are layers or beds of coal in many parts of the country, called *coal-fields*,—though certainly they are not much like green fields. A well-stocked coal-cellar under ground is one of the good treasures our God has laid up for English people.

In these fields the coal lies in a number of layers or strata, separated from one another by layers of slaty clay, called shale, and of coarse, hard sandstone, called grit, forming altogether what are known as *coal-measures:* that is, beds of sandstone, shale, clay, and coal, lie one above another, and one above another, to a great depth.

The strata of coal, called *seams*, are usually thin. They are wide enough, stretching under a large tract of country, but are often only a few inches deep, never more than six or eight feet—with one exception—there is a seam in Staffordshire thirty feet in thickness. The beds of grit and shale between the coal-seams are much thicker than the coal itself; many different seams of coal, however, lie under one another at the same spot.

The great northern coal-field, the Northumberland and Durham, supplies London and all the east and south coast towns with coal; as well as a good deal of the Continent. It reaches from the Tees to the Coquet, where it ends, to reappear again further north; having a length of eighty miles in all, and a breadth of from ten to twenty miles.

Bishop Auckland, Brancepeth, Durham, Chester-le-Street, are the centres of the coal-mining in Durham, and they all have mining villages near them. In

Northumberland, Newcastle, Warkworth, Morpeth, Throckley, Wallsend, from which the famous Wallsend coal comes, Hartley, Willington, and many other villages and towns, are the homes of the pitmen who work in the neighbouring mines. From Tweed to Tyne, the coal extends along the coast, and even dips under the German Ocean.

IV.—THE PIT.

Geologists can tell, by the sort of rock which appears at the surface, whether coal is likely to be found underground.

Let us suppose a coal-master is going to open a new pit: he chooses a likely spot for coal, but at present, perhaps, sees nothing but a grass field or a furzy common.

The first thing is to bore a hole deep down into the earth with a sort of chisel at the end of an iron rod; as the hole is not large enough for a man to follow the chisel, it is driven by a machine. This tool is so contrived that part of it can be drawn up every now and then with a bit of the ground it is working through, so that the men at the top may see whether it is going through grit, or clay, or seams of coal. If the boring tool goes through many coal seams, the coal-master knows that that is the place for his pit.

Then a *shaft* is sunk; a hole deep enough to reach a good thick coal-seam, and wide enough for men, and horses, and carts, to be lowered to the coal:

a round hole, which is sometimes sunk to a depth of five hundred yards before it touches a coal-seam.

When they reach a suitable seam, the miners drive a broad passage through it, from top to bottom, from roof to floor. This is called the *mother-gate;* gate is the north-country word for a road or way; and this is the mother-gate, because many passages are driven from it on either side. When all the gates have been driven, the coal-mine looks like a town with many streets, some wide and some narrow, with great pillars of coal here and there, like buildings.

The hewers are lowered into the deep darkness of this underground town, darkness so black, that it would make the darkest night seem bright. All the light they have is from the candle or little lamp which each man carries in his hat. Every man has his own place in the mine, and each sets to work with his pick to hew out the walls of coal. The coal is thrown into baskets, which lads draw along tramways to the great shaft. There it is put into waggons, which an engine raises to the surface.

Perils of the Pit.

The collier often works in galleries so low and narrow that he cannot stand upright, or even sit, but labours in a stooping posture, sometimes lying on his side, for—save for a short interval—eight or ten hours together; working by the glimmer of a small candle, five or six hundred yards down in the bowels of the earth. Often he must make his way through two or

three miles of underground passages to get to his work.

Nor is this all; the roof of his gloomy workshop may break in and crush him. The earth's crust is always pretty full of water, the water which soaks in after every rain; and though engines are kept at work to pump it up and keep the pits dry, a sudden rush of water may burst through at any time, fill the galleries, and drown the hewers. The air, too, is close and bad in these deep pits, often bad enough to poison a man, though great pains are taken to keep it moving in such a way as to make a constant *draught* right through the mine.

There is another danger more terrible than these. In an instant, in the most fearful manner, the miner may be scorched and shrivelled to a blackened mass, or shattered to pieces against the sides of the mine;—a great fire may break out suddenly and fill the pit with death.

We all know that the gas, with which our houses are lighted, is made from coal; and that if this gas be allowed to escape, so as to fill a room, a lighted candle taken into such a room would set the house on fire.

Coal, chiefly Newcastle coal, gives off a great deal of such inflammable gas in the pit. This gas mixes with the air, and moves along with the current, or draught, of air towards the shaft. Every now and then the collier lays open with his pick a hole in the coal, which is quite full of this gas, or, as the workmen call it, *fire-damp*, which rushes out with a blowing noise.

If a hewer with his lighted candle came in the way of such a *blower* sending out a torrent of gas, the gas would blaze up, the flame would spread like lightning to the other gas all over the mine; and battered by the explosion, and shrivelled in the fierce heat, horses and men would come to a terrible end, from which there is no way of escape.

These awful accidents occurred so often that a society was formed in the North to find some way of preventing them.

The question was, how to give the men light enough to do their work by without setting the fire-damp ablaze. The Society asked Sir Humphry Davy to help them; he visited the collieries, considered the matter, made many experiments, and at last found that if the fire-damp had to pass through very tiny holes to get to a flame, it would no longer take fire itself. Then he had lamps made with a fine network of wire round the candle, and everybody thought that with this Safety Lamp there would be no more explosions; as, supposing the fire-damp got through the wire to the flame of the candle, it would not blaze after passing through the little holes.

But the men find fault with *the Davy*, as they call it, because it gives so little light; they take off the wire network, and accidents have become even more common than before. The only way of preventing them seems to be to keep the mines well ventilated; that is to say, to keep the air that is in the mine always moving towards one shaft, and to get in a supply of fresh air by another. In this way,

the fire-damp, instead of lodging in holes and corners about the roof, is swept out through the mine, and goes up the shaft as up a chimney.

V.—THE STORY OF A PIECE OF COAL.*

You cannot hit upon a greater mistake than to suppose I was made, in the first place, just what you now see me,—a black mass of mineral. Many long ages ago, I was part of a waving forest of tree-ferns and gigantic club-mosses. The climate of England was very different then from what it is now; never too hot nor too cold, and very soft and balmy.

But what tongue can describe the wonders of the forests where I grew? Fancy club-mosses, four or five feet round the stem and fifty or sixty feet high, with their long leafy ribbons waving like the leaves of the aspen! There were thirty or forty different sorts of these immense club-mosses, and, shooting many feet above them, were huge 'horse-tails,' just like the 'horse-tails' you may now see growing in ditches, only so very high. Then there were graceful tree-ferns, and a kind of pine with berries as big as crab-apples; and, under the great trees, a thick underwood of small ferns grew out of the marsh.

This great forest grew by the seaside, and the land was slowly, slowly sinking. Every now and then the tide came in among the trees and went out again, leaving much sand behind it. In fact, many of the forests were actually buried thus, and their stony

* Adapted from Dr. Taylor's *Geological Stories.*

trunks are now met with, standing upright, in solid sandstone rock.

When a forest was buried in this way, other trees could not at first grow very well on sand-banks; but, as ages went on, soil gathered on the sand, and another forest grew in the place of the older, to be buried up in its turn.

During countless ages, this growth and covering up went on, until in some places, as in the South Wales coal-field, there are no fewer than one hundred different seams of coal, under each of which you may see a clay full of the roots of these ancient forests.

After the trees had been long buried, changes began to take place. The mass heated and turned black, just as a stack of hay does now when it has been packed in a damp state. By-and-by it was changed into a sort of pulp, so that you could not tell leaves from branches; and at last it became hard, and black, and bright,—the very coal you all know so well!

These ancient forests grew by means of the light and heat of the sun, so that a piece of coal is really so much fossil sunshine! And when you warm yourselves by the fire, you are really enjoying the heat of the sun which poured down on some forest of those old, old days, and was stored away by its leaves.

VI.—THE HOLY MEN OF THE NORTH.

Have you ever wondered how Holy Island came by its name? It is only an island at high water;

when the tide is out, a ridge of sand joins it to the coast of Northumberland. A poor place, filled for the most part with sand-hills, with many a rabbit-warren.

In the early Saxon days, the three northern counties, Northumberland, Durham, and Yorkshire, were ruled by a king of their own, and were, together, called 'Northumbria,' because they all lay north of the Humber.

The Northumbrians had learned about Christ from certain of the Roman missionaries who had come to Canterbury with Augustine; but the old heathen spirit had broken out afresh, and they were more than half heathen, and quite wild and lawless when King Oswald began to reign.

While he was still a boy, he had learned to serve God and to love men, from some Irish monks who dwelt upon Iona, a barren island off the west coast of Scotland. When he came to be king, he besought these monks for missionaries to teach his wild people.

Aidan, a man of holy and gentle character, came, and fixed his home upon Lindisfarne,—such another low, barren island as Iona. The king built him a monastery, and many good men gathered round him. When he had taught them, these went out as preachers into the pagan countries of Europe. Thus Lindisfarne, the home of holy men, earned its name of Holy Island. Aidan was its first bishop.

King and bishop wandered on foot over the three counties,—Aidan preaching to the rough country folk,

and the king telling them the meaning of his words, for Aidan could not speak the Saxon tongue.

The time came when Oswald was slain in fight with the pagan Penda, king of middle England. Another king arose, and there was another bishop,—the peasant bishop, Cuthbert. He had been brought up a shepherd-boy among the northern hills, and, like another shepherd boy in another hill country, all his thoughts were of God and of the 'White Christ.'

As he grew older, Cuthbert's heart became so full, he could keep his thoughts to himself no longer; he wandered about the moorland villages telling the people of the love of God. In the bitter weather, in regions wild and bleak, among the poor and rude, half-savage people, Cuthbert's kind, sweet face might be seen. And the people cared to listen, for he taught them in their own rough, north-country tongue, and made them laugh with many a pleasant saying which helped them to remember the truth he taught.

The time came, when, grown old and weary, he knew he could do no more; he fled to a little island, not far from Bamborough, hardly more than a sand-bank, and there made himself a hut of rough stones and turf, hoping to spend the rest of his days in prayer and praise.

But the monks and the people would not do without the holy man; they brought him back to Lindisfarne, and made him Bishop. A time of many troubles,—when the Christian king and his men were slain by the pagan Picts who had come across the border,—it was too much for the aged Cuthbert; he

returned to his island hut to die,—alone, save for the presence of his Master.

The Venerable Bede.

The good work of these holy men was not thrown away; less than fifty years after Cuthbert's death, no place in the world was so famous as Northumbria for its learned Christian men.

There were then great schools at Jarrow and York; and there was no man anywhere more wise and learned, more gentle and holy, more loving and busy, than Bede, the head of the Jarrow school. There was a monastery in Jarrow by the mouth of Tyne, and Bede never left it in his life; all his pleasure lay in learning, or teaching, or writing. While he was quite young he became a teacher, and 600 monks, besides many strangers, formed his school. A loving master he was, who laboured early and late for his scholars. When he was not teaching them he was busy writing lesson-books for their use: for those were days when there were no printed books, and but few written ones.

Bede wrote upon grammar and arithmetic, and many other subjects, useful books for his pupils. But we know him best by one full of stories of good men, who had lived in our country before his day—which contains the stories of Cuthbert and Aidan, and of many others.

The last thing he did for his boys was the best. There was no Bible then in our own English

tongue. Scholars might read it in Latin, but those who knew no Latin could not read or hear the Bible. When Bede was already an aged man, it came into his heart to translate the Gospel of St. John into English. While he was at this work the old man fell sick: he could not sleep, his breathing was bad, and he was weary and full of pain. Through all his pain he read with his boys and taught them, while they wept to think how soon they must lose their master.

Soon the master could no longer rise, and the Gospel of St. John was not yet finished. He called his scholars round his bed, and by turns they wrote as he dictated, weeping for the pain it gave him to think and to speak. In this way he spent his last day among his scholars. Toward nightfall, the little boy who was writing for him, said, 'It is finished now, dear master;'—and the weary master laid his head on the shoulder of his scholar, sang, 'Glory to God,' for the last time, and died. Through all the roar of its blast-furnaces the memory of the 'Venerable Bede' still lingers around Jarrow.

After the peaceful days of Bede there were many wars and fightings in Northumbria, until at last the fierce Danes came from over sea in their black boats. Holy Island lay in their way, so they landed and burnt cathedral and monastery, and the bishop and monks escaped how they could. One treasure they carried with them. When the aged Cuthbert had died upon Farne, a lighted torch had told the sad news to the monks of Holy Island; they came and fetched the body away, and held it after as their greatest

treasure; this they carried with them when they fled before the Danes.

For a time bishop and clergy settled at Chester-le-Street; but another party of Danes landed at Bamborough, and made their way south, burning and slaying; and bishop and clergy once more fled in terror; but not without the body of St. Cuthbert; they were uncertain where to go, and a monk dreamed that they were to carry the saint to Dunholme.

They came to Dunholme, where they found no people, but thick forest everywhere; it was a hill, with the river Wear flowing nearly all round it: here they made a tent of green boughs for their dead saint.

The river still flows round that same hill, and its banks are still thickly wooded; but there is no longer a forest on the hill, but a busy city, where paper, and carpets, and mustard are made—the city of Durham, where a fair cathedral covers the ashes of the saint, for whose sake the forest was first cut down, and people first came to dwell in woody Dunholme.

VII.—GRACE DARLING.

The little island of Farne, where Cuthbert raised his rude hut centuries ago, is dear to English people for another reason: Grace Darling lived there.

Who was Grace Darling? You shall hear.

The Farne Islands are a group of low little sandy islets, to the south of Holy Island, which they are within sight of, and quite close to Bamborough, where the Danes made their terrible landing. The sea

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covers them for the most part at high tide; covers, too, the rocks which lie among them; and many a good ship, driven landward in a storm, has been wrecked upon these unseen rocks.

A lighthouse stands to warn the seaman off this dangerous coast. Grace Darling's father, an old man, was the keeper of this lighthouse, and she lived with him and helped him to trim the lamps.

But though the light burnt duly, the good ship *Forfarshire*, on her way from Hull to Dundee, was wrecked upon these hidden reefs upon one stormy September night.

The Darlings thought not of sleep that night; but they could do nothing in the darkness. At early dawn they looked out and saw the wreck, with nine poor shivering souls still clinging to it, ready to be washed off by the next wave. Between them and the lighthouse was a long ridge of sharp rocks; the wind blew in fierce gusts; and the terrible breakers swelled to the very top of the lighthouse—great walls of sea, among which, surely, no boat manned by human hands might venture.

Grace Darling saw nothing but the shipwrecked sailors, and would have out the boat to go to their aid. The old man knew it was useless; told her, they and the boat would be swallowed up by the waves long before they could reach the wreck; but Grace only said, if her father would not go with her, she must go alone. He let her have her way; the boat was got out, and the old man and the young girl let themselves drift on that awful sea.

Did Another come over the waters to their aid, though it was our northern sea, and not the lake of Galilee? Certain it is they reached that wreck, and the men were brought ashore: *they* thought that only the power of God could have saved them by such feeble means.

Perhaps it was this thought that made Grace pay little heed to all the praise and presents she received. People came from afar to see the brave girl, carried away bits of the rock the lighthouse stood upon, wrote letters and verses in her praise; but Grace was unspoiled by it all. She took care of her father as of old, went about her household work in her plain print dress and neat hair; sewed, and helped to trim her father's lamps. Shortly, God took her to Himself.

CUMBERLAND AND WESTMORELAND.

I.—THE LAKE DISTRICT.

'THE Lakes,' or the 'Lake District,' lies within the southern half of Cumberland, the western half of Westmoreland, and the piece of Lancashire known as Furness. This is the playground of England, whither the young men come to climb the mountains; and, young and old, to be refreshed by the ever-changing beauty of lake and fell. In the season there are always tourists about, knapsack on shoulder, who make their way on foot, or by the good old-fashioned stage-coach; the railway has only penetrated into the beautiful valleys in one or two places as yet.

The market-place of Keswick, or of Ambleside, is a merry scene on a bright morning, when the coaches are about to start; there they are—Ullswater coach, Coniston coach, Windermere coach, Keswick coach—each with its four fine horses; the gay passengers crowd round, everybody mounts to the top, ladies and all—happy they who get the front seats—and, with a merry blast of the horn, off goes the coach!

Not leaving us in the market-place, though; we have secured the box-seat on the Keswick coach. By the way, what a pleasant village, or rather town, Ambleside is, built of the dark blue-grey rock of the slate mountains, and standing in an open valley, with towering mountains round it. Every village nestles in its dale in this lake country; and a hardy, upright race the dalesmen are: in the rural villages many of them are shepherds, for shepherding is the only kind of farm-work possible among the mountains.

The road to Keswick leads between fells, fringed with larch-trees, and is bordered by the Rotha river, until we reach Rydal Water — a fairy mere, with little green, tree-shaded islands dotted over it, and with mountain shadows, and cloud shadows, and gleaming lights, upon its waters. That rock, looking over the little lake, is 'Wordsworth's Seat;' and on the slope of the fell is Rydal Mount, which was the home of the Lake Poet.

Mr. Wordsworth was a great walker—wandered among the dales, and climbed the fells, and knew every mile of the beautiful lake country; and the beauty of it all was the joy of his life, and filled his heart with deep, holy thoughts, some of which he has put into sweet words for our enjoyment.

Even the musical names of the fells were a delight to him. He tells us how—

'As it befell,
One summer morning we had walked abroad
At break of day, Joanna and myself.
Our pathway led us on to Rotha's banks;

And when we came in front of that tall rock
Which looks towards the east, I there stopped short,
. . . . . such delight I found
To note in shrub and tree, in stone and flower,
That intermixture of delicious hues.

. . . . . .

When I had gazed, perhaps two minutes' space,
Joanna, looking in my eyes, beheld
That ravishment of mine, and laughed aloud.
The rock, like something starting from a sleep,
Took up the lady's voice, and laughed again:
That ancient woman seated on *Helm Crag*
Was ready with her cavern: *Hammar Scar*,
And the tall steep of *Silver How*, sent forth
A noise of laughter; southern *Loughrigg* heard,
And *Fairfield* answered with a mountain tone:
Helvellyn far into the clear blue sky
Carried the lady's voice; old *Skiddaw* blew
His speaking trumpet; back out of the clouds
Of *Glaramara* southward came the voice;
And *Kirkstone* tossed it from his misty head.'

It is not always quite so easy to wake the echoes; but the report of a gun, or the baying of the hounds, or, better still, the pealing thunder, is carried from hill to hill, as was this lady's laugh.

The road leads us on by Grasmere, which lies at the foot of Silver How. It is another lovely mere, larger than Rydal, set in a soft green vale, hemmed in by rugged mountains. The grave of Wordsworth is in the village churchyard. Under Helm Crag we go; the vale narrows, the mountains are steep and rugged, with streams of boulders down their slopes,

and, presently, we are under 'the dark brow of the mighty Helvellyn.'

Helvellyn.

Helvellyn is the monarch of the lake mountains. Sca Fell is 100 feet higher; Skiddaw, Sca Fell, and Helvellyn, are all over 3000 feet; but neither of the others is such a big, swelling giant of a mountain as Helvellyn. He is not seen to the best advantage, though; he stands, a giant in a crowd of giants; while Skiddaw, further north, has the field to himself, and shows the whole of his noble bulk.

We are too close to the monarch to see his crown; our road lies under his vast shoulder; but we cannot pass him by. We must leave our box-seat, and breast the hill, prepared for two or three hours' hard climbing. The best way to see the mountain in its grandeur is to follow the track which leads up by the Red Tarn. A tarn is a small mere or lake high up among the mountains, and this Red Tarn lies in a dip about 600 feet from the summit. It is shut in between two walls of rock—the Striding Edge and the Swirrel Edge: *edges*, indeed, for they are just steep, narrow, broken pathways, on the top of each wall of rock. If you are a good climber, and not apt to become giddy, you may make your way up by one of these edges. But beware of a false step on either side of the narrow pathway; one such step, and you are plunged down a precipice of one hundred feet.

There is a touching tale of a traveller who at-

tempted the passage on a snowy day, and fell. Wordsworth tells the story in the poem beginning,—

'A barking sound the shepherd hears.'

On the summit of the mountain there is an awful stillness; not an insect hums in the air; we no longer hear the roar of the mountain torrents; not a blade of grass is to be seen; cushions or tufts of moss, parched and brown, appear between the huge blocks and stones that lie in heaps on all sides. The snow lies here for half the year.

Derwent Water.

Coming down from Helvellyn, we are again in a smiling valley, with its beautiful lake, Thirlmere, this time, from which water is about to be carried to Manchester. At the head of Thirlmere the road turns, and we have a peep down the sweet vale of St. John's, watered by the Greta river. Presently we round the fells on our left, and Derwent Water and Keswick town lie below; and, further on, towering Skiddaw and Bassenthwaite Water.

Beautiful Derwent Water! the fairest of all the lakes, many people think, with its green shores and fringing trees, its islets and its mountain background; but perhaps Ulleswater, on the other side of Helvellyn, has a wilder beauty. Southey, another lake poet, less famous than Wordsworth, had his dwelling at Keswick, the pretty little town which stands on the lake.

He tells us how the waters come down at Lodore, the water-fall at the head of the lake :—

> 'Retreating and beating and meeting and sheeting,
> Delaying and straying and playing and spraying,
> Advancing and prancing and glancing and dancing,
> Recoiling, turmoiling, and toiling and boiling,
> And dashing and flashing and splashing and clashing;
> And so never ending, but always descending,
> Sounds and motions for ever and ever are blending,
> All at once and all o'er, with a mighty uproar :
> And this way the water comes down at Lodore.'

And at many another Force in this land of waterfalls; Airey Force, Sour Milk Force (white as milk), Stock Ghyl; for the rivers gather their waters on the high mountains, and have often to fall down steep walls of rock before they reach the valleys.

At the head of Borrowdale, the dale in which Derwent Water lies, there is a mine of plumbago, or black-lead—so at least it is called—for making pencils. There is a pencil factory here, and you may buy pencils marked with your own name in gold letters.

But we have no room to speak of half the things to be seen in this beautiful land of lakes; not of Windermere itself, the largest of the lakes, eleven miles long, and about three-quarters of a mile across, which lies chiefly in Furness; nor of Coniston Water, nor Coniston Old Man, nor of any of the Furness Fells, nor of wild Wast Water, nor of Buttermere.

It is very pleasant to know your mountains; to be able to pick out one giant shape from another; to

know that the Great Gable is something like the gable of a house; that Saddleback rises like a saddle; that High Street is a high, straight ridge, like a street up aloft; that the Pillar is something like a pillar, and that the Pikes, Sca Fell Pikes and Langdale Pikes, are pairs of giants with rounded heads that you may always recognise. But it is the mass, the strength of the everlasting hills, about you everywhere; the purple haze, the bloom on the mountains, lit up gloriously at sunrise and sunset; the valleys, and the lakes, and the torrents: these are some of the things that make up the joy and beauty of a mountain country.

In the distance, it is impossible to tell how the mountain slopes are covered; they lie, calm and grand, with their outlines softened by a veil of haze, purple, or rosy, or soft grey. But draw near, and you find the slopes fringed with larches, or carpeted with bracken—a carpet of warm, reddish gold, in the autumn. Down many of the bleaker hills are streams of broken rock, which look as if a high wind would bring them pouring into the valleys. The lower slopes are usually covered with short turf, and divided into pastures by rough stone walls. The shepherd and his wise dog, and the mountain sheep, are mostly the only wanderers on these lonely hills.

II.—THE STORY OF THE LAKES.

There are fewer people for its size in this Lake District than in any other part of England. Men

cannot till the Fells, or live upon them; and they spread, these great, rugged mountain masses, over the whole district. They do not run in chains, but are grouped, rising behind and around one another like huge land billows. Between each pair of long mountain ridges is a dale, long and narrow, with green meadows and trees. The villages are in these dales, and the lowest part of each dale or valley is usually filled with water—a lake, set like a gem in the green vale, bright, and clear, and glittering in the sunshine. A river brings water to the lake, and a river carries to the sea what water there is to spare when the bed of the lake is full; that is, when the water in the lake rises nearly as high as the land of the valley round it. Thus the Leven carries off the waters of Windermere; the Derwent, those of Bassenthwaite and Derwent Water. The mountain valleys in which the lakes lie are often at a great height above the surrounding land; and the rivers which drain them sometimes reach the lower land by sudden falls or leaps over steep faces of rock. This is one cause of the numerous waterfalls, or *forces*, of this region; though it more often happens that the river reaches the level of the lake by a leap from above. Sometimes, as in Scale Force, the fall is double—the water reaches a level, and then there is another break in the rock, and down it pours again.

Is there any reason why this part of England should be full of deep valleys, and lakes, and waterfalls?

Ages before man lived upon the earth, this land

of ours underwent strange changes. These northern hills were, at one time, buried under ice-sheets and glaciers; such sheets of snow and ice as are now to be found in Greenland, hundreds, perhaps thousands, of feet in thickness. The fine snow gathered on the mountain-tops, and was only got rid of by being frozen into a sheet which was always moving down, very, very slowly, to the lowest land it could reach; or, the great ice-river would thrust itself into the sea. Of course these ice-rivers grind down the hard rocks over which they travel, grind them and pound them into mud. Great fragments are broken off, too, and frozen into the ice-river, and slowly carried away. Where the ice-sheet descended from the mountains, naturally, it came down with the greatest force. Here great hollows were scooped out of the hard, solid rocks, and these hollows are now filled with fresh water—the lakes of our Lake District.

Northern England is no longer under these slow-moving rivers of ice; the climate has become so much warmer that the snow will not lodge on the highest mountain-tops for more than a few months in the year. But there are still traces of the time when this green and pleasant mountain country lay under perpetual ice and snow: the deep hollows in which the lakes lie; the long, flat valleys, which have been worn smooth by the ice-rivers on their slow way to the sea; and huge boulders, scattered over hill and vale, scratched all over with straight lines in a curious way. These boulders are just the fragments of rock which the ice-rivers had broken off and carried along

with them. When the ice melted, the boulders lodged just where they happened to be ; the scratches on the boulders were made by the ice-river as it ground its way over the rocks.

How came these ice-worn hollows to be filled with water? Much rain falls in this lake district, because the heads of the high mountains are among the clouds ; and when the clouds touch the mountain-tops the cloud-mist becomes water, and pours down as heavy rain. The rain-water gathers into rills, and torrents, and rivers ; the rivers hasten down the slopes in search of the lowest land they can find. Once in a deep hollow a river cannot get out until the hollow is filled, so the waters pour in and make a lake: when the hollow is filled the river finds its way out again at the other side, finds a low bed, and makes for the sea. This is not exactly all that has taken place, but it will help you to understand the history of these mountain lakes.

III.—THE FARMING AND MINING DISTRICTS.

There are two fertile valleys in Westmoreland: the Vale of Eden, upon which Appleby, the county town, stands, and the Vale of Kendal, a very old town, upon the Kent, where the wool of the mountain sheep is manufactured. The rest of the county is entirely filled with the Fells, or with the bleak moors on the east, the continuation of the Pennine Chain.

Cross Fell, 2900 feet, the highest point in the

range, is in Cumberland. In the dreary moors about Alston, further north, there are important lead-mines, and silver is found with the lead. Lead is also found in the Cumbrian or lake mountains, the dark rock of which is quarried for building purposes.

The Eden, the only considerable river in the two counties, flows north through a flat farming district, and winds round the old castle of 'merry Carlisle'—merry in the day of border warfare, and still a busy town, with glass, cotton, and iron-works. It has a very large railway-station, for the lines of four great companies meet here. Penrith and Wigton are market-towns.

A coal-field stretches from Wigton to Whitehaven. Maryport, Workington, and Whitehaven, are all busy towns among the collieries, which run in some places two or three miles under the Irish Sea; the colliers can hear the sea rolling overhead as they are at work.

A little south of Whitehaven is the red headland of St. Bees, the finest on this coast; where the cliffs are washed by a stormy sea, which has strewn the beach with huge rock boulders.

The Solway Firth, into which the Eden flows, divides Cumberland from the Scotch county of Dumfries: like Northumberland and Durham, this county belonged to the debateable border land. The border warfare was carried as far as Appleby, which was twice besieged by the Scots. Carlisle was often occupied by them; and at one time, for twenty

years, they held the whole of Cumberland and Westmoreland (1135–1157). There are still round towers along the border which remain from those stormy days. Cumberland contains part of the Roman wall, which ends on the shores of the Solway Firth. More interesting remains still are those of three Druid temples—stone circles ; the largest, called 'Long Meg and her Daughters,' is near Penrith. 'Long Meg' is a lady some six yards high.

LANCASHIRE.

I.—THE MOORS AND RIBBLESDALE.

THE moors of the 'Back-bone,' or the Pennine Chain, as it is named upon the maps, fill the greater part of Lancashire, south of the Ribble. They are often bleak and dreary, these rounded, swelling heights—wide wastes of heath, with scattered boulders, and stretches of spongy bog. But there are few things more delightful than a day on the moors when the purple heather is out, and the bilberries are ripe, and the sun is bright overhead. How the sweet, keen breeze off the high moors blows the cobwebs from the dusty and weary folk who make their way up from the busy towns!

Now and then the moors swell into distinct hills, higher than the rest: as Pendle Hill (1830 feet), the highest in this part of the county; and Rivington Pike, near Bolton, the water brought from which supplies the pipes of Liverpool, more than twenty miles distant. The high lands about Bolton—'Bolton-le-Moors'—rise to more than 1000 feet above the sea. Sometimes they take the form of a long rounded swell, called an 'edge,'

several miles in length—as Blackstone edge, between Lancashire and Yorkshire. The highest moors are in the east, on the Yorkshire side; the highland sinks towards the west into the low plain which borders the sea, and stretches for some miles inland.

The great South Lancashire coal-field lies in this moorland country between the Ribble and the Mersey; hence there are many mining villages in the dales, and busy towns, with collieries round them, and tall chimneys rising from them, marking the mills where many people labour; for this piece of East Lancashire is about the busiest bit of England.

There are not as many beautiful and clearly marked dales on the Lancashire as on the Yorkshire side of the 'back-bone:' two, however, Lancashire has, as lovely as any in the adjoining moorland county—the fair and fertile dales of the Ribble and the Lune.

Stonyhurst College lies within Ribblesdale, and this is how Mr. Howitt describes his visit to the spot: 'From the first opening of this splendid vale, you have Stonyhurst lying full in view; Ribchester, the celebrated Roman station, to the left, in the level of the valley; down the vale to the north-east, you have the castle of Clitheroe, standing on its bold and abrupt eminence; and as you wind along the eastern side of the dale, with the Ribble below you on your left, and above you, on your right, woods and cottages, with their little enclosures, the ruins of Whalley Abbey come in view, and, high beyond, the bare and cloud-mottled heights of Pendle Hill. The ruins of the

Abbey are still very extensive and picturesque. Old walls mingled with large trees; large windows here and there visible, still displaying their tracery; a house with smoking chimneys in the midst: and, running close past, is the Calder, a beautiful stream, between high banks. The lanes through which we drove were fine old lanes, with tall green hedges, sweet with the flowers of the elder and the wild rose. So we drove on, every few yards catching a peep into fields full of grass, or of fine uplands, distant hills, and hanging woods. All about us were green and whispering trees, and peeps into meadows rich with cattle; and the sound of the two rivers—the Hodder and the Ribble—which unite just below, came up to us delightfully.'

The Roman Catholic college is a large and handsome building, and the method of teaching is thought to be very good: not a word is exchanged between the students during the hours allotted to study.

Broad meadows and pasture fields are common in Lancashire; the feeding of cattle, and the making of butter and cheese, are the chief kinds of farming work done in the county, perhaps because the people are mostly at work in the mills, and cannot attend to crops. In the river valleys, however, the vales of Lune, Ribble, and Mersey, crops are raised—good wheat, and oats, and capital potatoes, for which last Lancashire is rather famous.

II.—FURNESS AND THE SEA-BOARD.

Furness is a bit of Lancashire, entirely separated from the rest of the county by the waters of Morecambe Bay. The little Winster stream divides it from Westmoreland, and the Duddon, from Cumberland; but nowhere does it touch the shire of which it forms a part.

Furness is in every way like the two counties between which it is wedged. It is a bit of mountain country, full of the slate mountains of the Cumbrian group.

Like Scotland, it consists of highlands and lowlands. Low Furness is the peninsula at the end of the district, which has low shores, and low islands lying off the shores. The largest of these is Walney Isle.

Slate is quarried in the slate mountains of High Furness, and veins of lead and copper are worked. In Low Furness, where the rocks are not of slate, but of mountain limestone, a great treasure has been found of late years,—enormous beds of iron ore, which yield iron of the very best kind. This valuable find has changed much of Low Furness into a 'black country,' full of the roar of blast-furnaces, smoke, and the clang of many hammers. Barrow has become quite lately a large and busy iron-working town. Ulverston, the next largest town, is also busy about the iron trade.

Just beyond the din and bustle of Barrow, in a narrow, fertile vale, are the grand and peaceful ruins

of Furness Abbey ; the roof is gone, but there are still walls, and windows, and glorious arches, lofty and wide, that fill the beholder with awe.

The whole of the Lancashire coast is low, and it is in many places skirted by bogs, or 'mosses.' The wide inlet of Morecambe Bay stretches far into the land, and the tide comes in, sudden, strong, and high, as into all the openings upon this western coast. At low water, there is an endless stretch of white sand, called, near Morecambe (a bathing place), the 'Lancaster sands.'

The town of Lancaster stands on the slope of a hill rising from the river Lune. On the top of the hill are the towers of the strong and stately Castle, 'the honour and grace of the whole town.' It is now used as the county gaol,—this strong keep, which was once the home of John of Gaunt.

The low, level land between Lancaster Bay and the mouth of the Ribble, is called the 'Fylde.' There are two or three bathing-places, for the folk of the busy towns, upon its coast,—Fleetwood and Blackpool. The sea is going out so far from Southport, a watering-place south of the Ribble, that the long pier hardly reaches the water.

III.—LIVERPOOL.

Liverpool contains nearly half-a-million people. There are in it streets of warehouses, full of the goods which its 'merchant princes' have brought from over sea, or are going to send forth in ships all over the

wide world. There are streets full of handsome shops; there are handsome buildings,—St. George's Hall, with its splendid organ, the Sailors' Home, the Town Hall, the Custom House. There are endless narrow streets, where the poor folk live; but there are not factories, as in Manchester, for everybody is busy about the shipping, or, in some way, about *commerce*. The chief business of Liverpool is to send abroad the cotton goods of Lancashire, and to bring in the raw cotton from America, and elsewhere. But this is far from being the only business of this great port, which has the largest foreign trade in the kingdom. Linens, woollen stuffs, iron goods; salt, soap, and sugar; earthenware and glass, and most British manufactures are sent abroad. And whatever things are produced in all lands upon the face of the globe,—pleasant to the eye or good for food, or in any way useful or precious,—these are brought into England by the ships of this mart of nations, this crowning city, whose merchants are princes, whose traffickers are the honourable of the earth.

The ships from Ireland bring, not only butter and eggs, pork and bacon, but a constant stream of Irish people. Many of these settle in Liverpool, which has a large Irish population, mostly poor folk who have no clear way of getting a living; but many just come to take their places in the emigrant ships which carry them over the ocean to find a home, and work, and wages in the New World. English and Scotch people, also, sail in these huge, crowded ships; for Liverpool is the chief emigration port in the kingdom.

It is very important that there should be abundant room for the countless vessels which are always to be seen in Liverpool harbour, waiting to be loaded or unloaded, or to be repaired after some stormy voyage.

The town stands at the mouth of the Mersey, whose wide estuary forms a splendid harbour; it is three quarters of a mile across at Liverpool, and yet wider higher up. Then, such a chain of *docks* has been made for the shipping as is not to be seen anywhere else in the world, except in London,—thirty-eight of them, stretching more than six miles along the river-side.

What are docks? They are just basins for the ships to stand in, hollowed out of the bank of the river, each one large enough to hold many ships, and divided from the river by strong walls, with huge gates which are opened to let the vessels pass in and out.

There are two kinds of docks,—wet and dry. Wet docks are used for the loading and unloading of vessels, and are generally full of water, so that the ships may keep afloat. This is contrived by shutting the gates before the tide goes out, so that the dock remains full, when, by the river banks, the water has gone down. Ships which are to be repaired are floated into the dry docks, so that the workmen can easily get at them. The tide is allowed to ebb from these docks, and the gates are shut when they are empty of water. Around the docks are quays, mostly crowded with sea-faring folk, and with warehousemen, busy about the lading of the ships. Truly a won-

derful sight, full of interest and busy life, is the shipping of Liverpool.

The first wet dock made in our country for merchant ships was in Liverpool; and Lancashire may also boast of the first railway for passengers (between Liverpool and Manchester), and of the first English canal.

The Tame and Goyt, two streams which rise in the moorlands, join at Stockport to form this Mersey river, so famous for its traffic.

The land is low between the Mersey and the Moors, sinking here and there, into spongy bogs. Chat Moss, which has been partly drained, is one of the largest of these.

Lancashire is not without its memories of battle and siege. At Preston, Wigan, and Warrington, the King's army was defeated by the army of Cromwell during the Civil Wars. The bravest story is of how Lathom House, near Ormskirk, was held for the King by Charlotte, countess of Derby. Lathom House 'stood upon a flat, upon a moorish, springy ground; was surrounded by a strong wall of two yards thick. Upon the wall were nine towers, and in every tower were six cannons, that played, three the one way and three the other. Within the wall was a moat, eight yards wide and two deep; and there was a high tower, called the Eagle Tower, in the midst of the House; the gate-house was also a strong and high building, with a strong tower on each side of it; and on the towers were placed the best and choicest marksmen, who fired at the enemy below, marking particularly the officers.'

Strong as was the old Lathom House, the wonder remains that, with three hundred men, the brave lady of Lathom held it for three months against an army of the Parliament, ten times as numerous, under Sir Thomas Fairfax. At last, Prince Rupert, one of the King's generals, came to the relief of the Lady; the enemy retreated, and the Countess and her children left Lathom and went to their home in the Isle of Man.

The next year the House was again besieged; but there was no longer a brave and beautiful lady to put spirit into the defenders and make them glad to die for her and for their king: they held out as long as food and powder lasted; when these failed, they surrendered upon bare terms of mercy, and much of the fine old house was thrown to the ground.

IV.—THE COTTON TOWNS.

There are more people in Lancashire than in any other county of England; and by far the greater number of these are employed in some way or other about cotton; they spin, or weave, or bleach, or print, or buy, or sell, *cotton.*

Manchester, a city with more than half-a-million of people, is the centre of this great manufacture; it stands upon the Irwell, a tributary of the Mersey, so black that the Manchester clerks are said to run down to the river every morning to fill their ink-pots. Mersey and Irwell are the two hardest worked rivers in the world. Salford is on the other side of the Irwell; it is joined to Manchester by bridges, and the two make

one monster crowded town ; city now, for Manchester has been made a Bishop's see, and the cathedral is the fine old church of St. Mary. It is one of the richest cities in the world, and has gay shops in Market Street, and some handsome buildings—the Town Hall and the Exchange, the Free-Trade Hall and Owens College ; but statues and buildings are alike grimy with the smoke of the tall mill-chimneys. Everywhere there are warehouses, some of them handsome, in which the cotton is stored—raw cotton for the mills, or goods for the shops ; these, and the mills, and the endless streets of small brick houses, where the mill 'hands' live, point out Manchester as a great manufacturing town. A circle drawn round Manchester at a distance of ten miles, or so, from Market Street, would take in a district which is almost one huge town, or indeed one huge factory. Bolton, Bury, Middleton, Rochdale, Oldham, Ashton, Staleybridge, Stockport—all cotton towns—lie within this ring, and between them and the centre, Manchester, are endless cotton villages and mills.

There are several reasons why this particular spot should be the centre of the cotton manufacture. Five centuries ago, when Edward III. married the daughter of the Earl of Hainault, he thought a great deal of the skill of her country people in spinning and weaving cloth—cotton was not then known—so he invited a number of these Flemish clothiers to settle in England that they might teach his own people. Many of these came to Bolton, and were soon busy with their spinning-wheels and looms. Three centuries

later, in the reign of Elizabeth, the King of France grievously persecuted the Protestants in his country; wherefore they came, clever, industrious people, skilful spinners and weavers, to take refuge in friendly England, where they were made very welcome. Many of these, too, followed the strangers who had first come to Bolton. They came in the sabots which may still be heard clattering through the streets of many a foreign town; and these same sabots—wooden clogs with brass buckles—have been worn in Lancashire ever since by men and women, lasses and lads; and a wonderful clatter they make as they come pouring out of the mills at noon.

The high moorlands give rise to many streams which supply water for bleach-works and dye-works before they reach the Mersey. Then, the towns within this circle lie upon a wide coal-field, in which the coal-measures reach a depth of 7000 feet, and yield capital coal: in some cases, the beautiful cannel coal, which is bright and smooth like jet, and burns with a clear flame, and hardly any smoke.

The collieries supply fuel for the mighty engines which do the work of the mills; and close at hand, in Furness, or in one of the neighbour counties, is iron to make these same engines. The Mersey and Irwell, with which many canals are connected, carry the bales to the broad Mersey mouth, and on to Liverpool—the great port of the west—to which the raw cotton is brought, and whence the cotton stuffs of Lancashire are carried out by thousands of ships all over the wide world.

There are several large cotton towns beyond this

circle, most of them upon outlying collieries—Burnley, Blackburn, Preston, upon the pretty river Ribble, Chorley, Wigan, a very black coaling town with a beautiful old church, and Warrington. In Manchester, Wigan, and Warrington, there are iron and brass-foundries where the engines are made. Rochdale still carries on the old woollen manufacture, and a great deal of silk is made in Manchester.

Standing in Market Street, Manchester, at one end of which is the Exchange, we are in the heart of the whole system. Around us are wholesale warehouses and offices wherein is done all the business between dealers, manufacturers, spinners, bleachers, for all the district. In one little room, perhaps, a bargain is struck for, say, 10,000 pieces of calico, as per sample; the goods at the moment, perhaps, being made at Bolton. Leaving Market Street, and walking in any direction towards the suburbs, we come in sight of the cotton-factories, enormous brick buildings, of which there are over two hundred in and near Manchester. A first-rate cotton-factory, with machinery, costs about 100,000*l.*, and there are over 1000 such factories in the county.

They are mostly built by canal or river-side; the part of Manchester near the Oldham road has many large mills, some of which employ 1000 workpeople: and truly it is a thing to be remembered to see them pour forth, with much chatter and laughing, and clatter of wooden clogs, on their way home to their meals, in the little streets hard by. The women mostly wear shawls over their heads instead of bonnets.

The factories all look very much alike; a huge chimney, and a long building with a flat front, in which there is a countless number of windows.

V.—INSIDE A MILL.

What is cotton? Just the tiny white hairs which, all twisted and pressed together, make a warm, soft bed for the seeds of a plant of the same family as our common mallow; a plant which needs a warmer climate than ours, however, and grows best in the Southern States of America, in some little sea islands off the American coast, in the East Indies, and in Egypt; in some other warm lands, too, but from these we get our chief supply.

It is a grand thing to 'find out the knowledge of witty inventions;' and a witty invention it was to make cloth of these tiny filaments of cotton. There are other plants whose seeds are wrapped up in fine, soft, white, hair beds; but these hairs cannot be spun into thread and woven into cloth, and for this reason —they do not twist. It is because the tiny hairs round the cotton seed are inclined to twist round one another that they can be joined together and made into thread; and so fine are they that many thousands of them go to form the thickness of a thread in the finest lace.

The cotton, as the ships bring it in from America and elsewhere, is called raw cotton; it is just as it has left the pod, hard and matted; full of little lumps, and bits of stick, and seed, and dirt. In this state it

is carried in bales to the mills. A crane hoists these bales to a large room at the top of the mill; a room which is packed with cotton almost as if it were a bale itself. Here are machines, called 'blowers' by the workpeople, which blow with a deafening roar; the hard, lumpy cotton is put into these, and comes out a soft, white cloud, like swan-down.

Has one blowing puffed out all the seeds? Not so; it is again dragged between two rollers, and beaten between two beaters, which thrash out sand and seeds; and a great wind, made by a fan underneath, blows the cotton-wool apart into the tiny hairs or filaments of which it is made up.

Seven times over is the cotton thrashed and fanned in this way, until, at last, it bubbles out at the end of the machine, a beautiful white stream of cotton-wool, quite clean after all its beatings and blowings.

The next thing is to make these millions of tiny, curling filaments, each nearly too small to be seen or felt, lie straight, side by side. We must go into the *carding*-room to see how this is managed—a huge room with, perhaps, a hundred great carding-machines in it, standing side by side. You think, perhaps, that a *card* is a card upon which the cotton is wound. Nothing of the kind: a *card* is an iron roller, set all over with steel wires, shorter and closer together than the hairs of a clothes-brush. There is a large *card* and a number of smaller *cards* in a carding-machine; the cotton enters into the greedy maw of the machine, and is drawn through the prickles of one card after another, until, after the last combing, every fila-

ment lies straight and even, like the hairs of our head.

The soft cloud of cotton, that leaves the machine after the carding, is pressed together and rolled and drawn by one machine after another, until it becomes a sort of soft cord, about the thickness of a candle-wick. It is then wound upon bobbins, and is ready for the spinning-frame.

Each cotton filament upon the bobbins lies straight and even, and is so far ready for use ; the next thing is to take a few thousands of these ends off the bobbin, and twist them into a thread—a thread such as you may see in the ravellings of calico.

A hundred years ago, the plan in Lancashire was for every weaver to buy as much carded cotton as he wanted ; to take it home to his cottage, where wife and girls would spin it into threads with a spinning-wheel, in working which, the woman would keep the filaments straight with her hand, while the turning of the wheel would cause them to twist into a single thread. Each woman could spin just one thread at a time, and the father would weave this thread into calico.

But if you notice how many threads cross each other in a piece of calico, you will see this must have been rather slow work. A poor weaver, called Hargreave, thought so too, and invented a machine called a *spinning-jenny*, which could spin eight threads at once. One would think the weavers would have been glad to get their threads spun so much more quickly ; but no : they said Hargreave would spoil their trade ;

they broke his machine, and drove him from his home.

A few years later, a barber of Bolton, Richard Arkwright—who came to be *Sir* Richard Arkwright—invented another machine, by which many more threads could be spun at once; and a Mr. Crompton, also of Bolton, invented the *mule-jenny*—a wonderful machine, which will keep one or two thousand spindles at work.

How these machines double the filaments and twist them into threads is too deep a matter for us to explain. The great mule-frames stand in pairs all through the length of a very large room; the machines do all the spinning, better, perhaps, than if they had sense; all that the women and boys who watch them have to do is just to join any one of the many thousand threads which happens to break; and this they do with a wonderfully quick twist. Wide awake must they be, and on the watch every instant; not a moment have they to speak or play, or a woeful tangle the broken thread gets into.

The thread goes through much more before the warp is made ready for the loom: at last one or two hundred bobbins of thread are put on the bars of a *horse*—something like a clothes-horse. From all these bobbins the ends are drawn out towards a roller just the breadth of the cloth required; round the roller they wind, a broad sheet of calico without the cross-threads. These cross-threads are put in by the loom: the business of the loom is to lift every other thread, as a darning-needle does when you are crossing a hole;

then, when the threads are lifted, to throw the shuttle across with a cross-thread; then to lower these threads and raise the others, and again to throw the shuttle back. The cross thread carried by the shuttle is called the 'weft,' and self-acting arms fling it backwards and forwards—the arms of the *power-loom*—which must also press each weft-thread up close against the last. In the old days, the weaver had to throw the shuttle; now, the machine does it all, and the women and girls who attend to the weaving just see that it has plenty of thread, join the thread when it breaks, stop the engine if anything goes wrong. Easy work, you will say; it might be so, but it is work which does not allow them to look off or pause for a moment. How the looms do their work is another matter too hard for you to understand. The *power-loom*, which thus converts the threads into actual calico, was invented by Dr. Cartwright. There is much to be done yet; the calico must be bleached; perhaps dyed; perhaps it is to have a pattern printed upon it: but we have no room to describe how these things are done; indeed, before it reaches the loom, the cotton has gone through many processes of which we have said nothing.

The noise in each of the vast rooms is so stunning that you cannot hear yourself speak; especially in the weaving room, which is usually on the ground-floor. There, 1000 or 2000 looms, each as big as a flat piano, are ranged side by side over an immense floor, in such a way that one woman can look after two looms. The thing which takes away your breath

most of all is the enormous quantity of work which is being done in every room of the factory. Who does it all? Not the 'hands,' men and women, boys and girls; they are, for the most part, 'minders,' that is, their business is to see that all goes on right; but it is the iron machines which clean the cotton and card it, spin it, and weave it. These machines are cunningly contrived, each one to do its work; if you can but keep it in motion each machine will go on doing the same thing, in the same way, for ever, or until it is worn out. The thing is, how to keep the machines moving: this is work too hard for men, too hard for horses; for as a single machine often does the work of hundreds of men, it would require the strength of hundreds of men to keep it in motion.

Let us go into a single room—the spinning-room—of the factory, and see how the machines are kept at work: '18,000 spindles and bobbins are whirling round in a giddy waltz;' that is to say, the work of 18,000 persons appears to be going on of its own accord. 'A heavy iron shaft, rising through the floor and piercing through the ceiling, turns, just before its exit upwards but one cogged wheel, and this quickens to life the 18,000 bobbins, as the last and least of its effects. A bright iron shaft traverses the middle of the ceiling; tackle is joined to this shaft near each frame, and thus the frame is kept at work.' It is a sort of House that Jack Built: the moving of the tackle keeps the machines in motion, the moving of the shaft along the ceiling keeps the tackle in motion, the cog-wheel works upon that, and the shaft which

comes up from the floor turns the wheel. You see the same sort of thing in each of the rooms,—a great shaft working up and down, going through floor and ceiling, and turning a wheel which moves a shaft, which moves the tackle, which moves a thousand machines.

But we have not yet got to the root of the matter: what sets the great shaft in motion? In a remote part of the factory, in a house all to himself, lives the giant who really does the work—a fellow with the strength of two or three hundred horses, and with power, as we have seen, to work in many places at the same time. *Steam* is his name; and here is the great steam-engine, in the boiler of which this mighty workman is born. A giant itself is the engine with enormous wheels and cranks, and the great shaft which, set in motion, gives motion to all the other shafts in the building. Everything about this monster is kept bright and clean and as beautiful as may be, for the engineer usually takes pride in his engine.

A great deal of the work of the mills is done by little hands; boys and girls make as good 'minders' as men and women; and as they work for less wages, the mill-owners are willing to employ them. It would never do, however, for English boys and girls to grow up without any schooling, so the law compels these young 'hands' to be sent to school for half the day.

YORKSHIRE.

I.

YORKSHIRE is the largest county in England. Indeed it is like a separate country, with its own mountains and its own rivers rising in them, and flowing into the German Ocean, which washes the whole of its eastern side. The great western moors, with their mountain peaks, shut it in on the west; the Tees divides it from Durham, the Humber from Lincoln.

The whole of the west of the county is filled with the wide moors, which are marked upon maps as the Pennine Mountains, though Yorkshire people do not call them by that name. Then the Vale of York, the widest plain in England, stretches through the centre of the county, and beyond its limits, north and south. East of the Vale are another rounded swelling moorland—the North York Moors—and a chalk ridge, the Yorkshire Wolds, which run north from the Humber: between the Wolds and the North York Moors is the Vale of Pickering.

Holderness, low and level, lies between the Wolds and the sea.

Yorkshire is divided into three Ridings, or *Thirdings*, as perhaps the word means. In the North and East Ridings, corn is grown and cattle are reared; but the West Riding, the beautiful mountain-country, is one of the busiest manufacturing districts in England.

II.—THE DALES AND THE WESTERN MOORS.

The Yorkshire moors are so high that they are really wide mountains, upon which a man may stand and gaze round, and see nothing but moors between him and the far horizon; bleak, desolate moors, with crags and huge boulders, and deep clefts in the limestone rock; barren moorland, upon which little will grow except ling and the hardy bilberry; and where there are wide morasses, in which the mountain streams gather their waters. Here and there the moors rise into mountain summits; Mickle Fell, Ingleborough, and Whernside—all over 2300 feet—are the highest.

Like other limestone mountains, these have deep caverns in their recesses; there is a cave in Ingleborough into which persons have penetrated fully half a mile, though only by creeping part of the way on hands and knees. Whernside has wide and lofty chambers; but they are not so long as those of Ingleborough. Hanging from the roofs of these caves, and growing up from their floors, are numberless

forms, made by the constant dropping of water, which contains atoms of lime. The limestone of the mountains is quarried for building purposes, and the towns of the West Riding have a handsome appearance, because most of the houses are of stone.

There is another precious substance in this limestone country: a wide bed of coal stretches under the surface, from Leeds to Nottingham: a great natural coal-cellar on the spot, to feed the fires, whose smoke issues from the tall factory chimneys, which rise on all hands.

The dales of the West Riding are its great beauty. The rivers issue from the moors between spurs, which stretch far to the east, each river between its own two spurs; at first a noisy torrent making its way through a narrow, rocky ravine; then a sparkling and rapid river flowing through a dale, which opens out wider and wider, until it joins the broad York Vale. These dales are full of wild beauty —soft and green, bright and musical with running water, and flanked by rugged mountain walls, with overhanging crags and trees.

Beginning at the north, Swaledale is the first, which is altogether in Yorkshire. The town of Richmond, with its Norman keep, stands among hills and woods upon the river Swale, and near it is Easby Abbey, one of the numerous ruined monasteries of Yorkshire. There is hardly a river valley in the West Riding but has the ruins of at least one abbey.

Wensley Dale, the valley of the Ure, the river which joins with the Swale to form the Yorkshire Ouse, is the next in order. Here are the remains of Jervaux Abbey; part of the church, the ruins of the refectory, where the monks used to eat, and of the kitchen, where their meals were cooked. Fountains Abbey, the most perfect ruins of the kind in England, stands in a beautiful spot. A very wealthy and luxurious abbey it was when Henry VIII. sent the monks adrift.

The old city of Ripon, with its cathedral, stands also in the Ure valley. The Nidd, the Wharfe, the Aire, with the Calder and the Don, each flows through its own bonny dale to join the Ouse.

Harrogate, a fashionable place, where people go to drink the mineral waters, is in Niddsdale. Near Harrogate is Knaresborough, with its castle — a town almost as beautifully placed as Richmond, among cliffs, and woods, and hills.

The beautiful Wharfdale is the next in order, with Otley, and Ilkley, and Ben Rhydding—a large establishment where people take baths and drink mineral waters. Higher up are the ruins of Bolton Abbey. Half-a-mile from the abbey, the edges of the rock on either side of the river come so close that it is easy to stride across.

'This striding place is called *The Strid*,
A name which it took of yore:
A thousand years hath it borne that name,
And shall a thousand more.

'And hither is young Romilly come,
And what may now forbid
That he, perhaps for the hundredth time,
Shall bound across the Strid?

'He sprang in glee,—for what cared he
That the river was strong, and the rocks were steep?
But the greyhound in the leash hung back,
And checked him in his leap.

'The boy is in the arms of Wharfe,
And strangled by a merciless force;
For never more was young Romilly seen,
Till he rose a lifeless corse.

'Now there is stillness in the vale,
And long, unspeaking sorrow;
Wharfe shall be to pitying hearts
A name more sad than Yarrow.'

WORDSWORTH.

The Lady Alice, the boy's mother, gave the riches, which should have been her son's, to build and endow the fair abbey of Bolton.

Airedale also has its ruined abbey. Kirkstall, with its ivied walls and carpet of grass, stands just far enough from the smoke to be a holiday walk for the 'hands' of the Leeds factories.

Kirkstall, like most of the Yorkshire abbeys, was built in the twelfth century. Though the monks sought pleasant sites for their homes, where was wood, and water, and fish in the rivers, and a fair country to look upon, they did not seek ease for themselves, but built cells—cold, narrow, and damp—

in which to sleep or watch. But in later days there were monks who cared rather to eat and drink, and live easy lives, than to serve God and His poor; and the time came when Henry VIII. had them all turned out of the monasteries, and their riches taken for other uses.

This was a great misfortune at the time, because there were no hospitals then, and no poor-houses, and it was to the monastery that the poor man went for help in his troubles. The Yorkshiremen gathered together, with the men of the other northern counties —thirty thousand in all—peasants, and nobles, and priests, and went on what was called the 'Pilgrimage of Grace.' They meant to march through England, take the fortresses, and conquer all who opposed them, until the king should promise to let things be as they were before. They took the city of York, but the king's army dispersed them, and the leaders were hung, among them the two abbots of Jervaux and Fountains.

III.—THE CLOTHING TOWNS.

Airedale, with the valley of the Calder, beautiful as any in Yorkshire, is the centre of the great woollen manufacture. The hills feed the streams, and the streams supply the water employed in preparing the wool, and in finishing the cloth — streams which come clear and sparkling to the mills, but carry away thick, dark-coloured waters. Reaching underground from Leeds southward, through the whole district,

is a great coal-field, which supplies fuel to work the many thousand engines employed in this manufacture. Right and left are two great ports—Liverpool and Hull—which send away the woollen goods and bring in the raw wool; and there are canals and railways to carry the goods between all the clothing towns and these ports.

Leeds, Bradford, Halifax, Wakefield, Dewsbury, and Keighley, are the clothing towns in the valleys of the Aire and the Calder.

The forest of tall chimneys which rises above Leeds shows it to be a busy manufacturing town; over a hundred chimneys rise from as many mills, where more than ten thousand hands—men, women, and children—are employed. Tall as the chimneys are, the town is smoky enough, and at noon, when the mill-people pour out to their dinners, there is much bustle and noise. The factories are near the river Aire, which flows through the town.

All these mills are employed in making *broad-cloth*—made of the short wool of the sheep, which, besides being spun and woven, is *felted* or *pulled*, to produce the cloth surface; that is, the cloth is beaten until the fibres of the wool become so locked into each other as to hide the warp and weft threads.

Huddersfield and Halifax are also great clothing or cloth-making towns; there are many woollen factories in both; open quadrangles, surrounded by buildings. The sorting, preparing, spinning, weaving, dressing, and finishing, are each done in a distinct part of the building.

Bradford, which stands where three valleys join, is in the heart of the district, which makes worsted goods ; that is, all woollen goods which are not pulled after being woven. All round it are busy towns and villages, occupied by the makers of cloth or stuff. After dark, on a winter's evening, the town is illuminated by the light thrown from the countless windows of the large factories ; six or seven stories of such windows, in a long line, and close together, each throwing out a bright glow. Merinoes, alpacas, coburgs, cords, every kind of stuff is made in Bradford : it is also the great wool market of England.

Near Bradford, on the Aire, is the model town of Saltaire, built by the late Sir Titus Salt for the workpeople employed in his enormous mill, in which the material called alpaca is made—a stuff introduced by Sir Titus himself.

From Bradford to Keighley, the road leads through clothing villages. Going south-west, over a road all hill and dale, we come suddenly upon Halifax, with many factory chimneys shooting up and a handsome freestone Piece Hall. Halifax was once the centre of the Yorkshire woollen-works ; some five centuries back, a band of Flemish clothiers settled here, having been invited over by Edward III. ; and an old writer says of them, 'Happy the yeoman's house in which one of these Dutchmen did enter, bringing industry and wealth along with them.' To this day the peculiar dialect of the Halifax people bears witness to their Flemish origin.

Huddersfield also is a busy clothing town, the

centre of a cluster of clothing villages. Fancy goods, stuffs with a pattern worked in with different coloured yarns, are made here.

All the Yorkshire flannels are made at Rochdale, in Lancashire, where baizes also are manufactured.

Dewsbury makes blankets; also shoddy, woollen rags torn up, fibre from fibre, and made into new cloth. A little new wool is mixed in, and the whole is woven into very coarse fabrics.

There is a large *flax*-mill on the Aire at Holbeck. near Leeds, where more than two thousand persons are employed. The buildings look like a little town, The mill is only one storey high—an enormous room, one of the largest in the world—airy, healthful, and pleasant, where all the operations can be seen at once. The machines stand in two rows down the room. The workpeople are nearly all women and girls. Upon the roof there is a considerable field of fresh-looking wavy grass. Barnsley is also a linen-making place.

IV.—KNIVES AND FORKS

Sheffield, which stands in a hollow, surrounded by hills, between which five small rivers flow to join in the hollow, has been called 'the metropolis of steel.' Nearly all the steel goods made in the country bear the Sheffield mark; indeed, there is hardly a country in the world where you may not find knives with 'Sheffield' on the blade.

Not only table-knives and forks, but penknives, razors, lancets, scythes, saws, scissors, shears, spades,

and shovels—every kind of steel implement—is made in Sheffield and in the villages round it; generally in large manufactories, but many a cottage has its own forge, where some particular kind of knife or edge-tool is made.

Is it that there are steel-mines near Sheffield? The beautiful, hard, bright steel does not come out of mines; it is *made*. Much coal is used in the making, and Sheffield stands upon the Yorkshire coal-field; water, too, is needful in some of the processes, and Sheffield has plenty; but the iron, which is the chief thing, is all brought from abroad. There is a mine in Sweden which furnishes better iron for this purpose than any other in the world; and many ship-loads of it are brought every year to Hull, and carried thence to Sheffield.

To change iron into steel, a certain quantity of carbon must be got into the iron. Burn a stick until it is soft and black, and you will see what carbon is.

A huge oven, or pit, is filled with, first, a layer of carbon or charcoal, then a layer of iron-bars, then a layer of charcoal, and so on, until the layers are about thirty deep; then the surface is covered with a kind of clay, and a fire of Sheffield coal is kindled underneath, and kept up fiercely for many days. The iron is in a red-hot, or, perhaps, a white-hot state; the charcoal, also, is highly heated; and the iron seems gradually to absorb a portion of charcoal into the very heart of the bar. When the bars are removed from the furnace they are in a blistered state; they are known as *blister-steel*, and are not yet fit for

use. To make *common steel*, the metal is heated again and hammered with an enormous hammer to make it tough.

When we see '*shear-steel*' on our table-knives, we must not suppose they have been cut with a pair of shears. This kind of steel is so named because it was found suitable for making shears. It is made by heating several bars red-hot, and hammering them one upon another until they are all welded together into a very close, tough mass. The hammers are of huge size, and are worked up and down by steam-engines.

But the most beautiful steel of any is *cast-steel*, to make which a fiercer heat than is used for any other purpose whatever must be employed ; and the furnaces and melting-pots must be made so as to endure this great heat.

To make the melting-pots, a thin layer of the proper clay, after being mixed with water and well worked up, is spread on the floor of a room ; then two men, with naked feet, dance, and shuffle, and jump over it, again and again, from side to side, and from end to end, for five or six hours, until there is not an air-bubble anywhere. Then the clay is poured into moulds, and made into pots and dried, and made ready for use ; and after all this care and pains in making them, the melting-pots last—*a single day !*

There is little to be seen in a *cast-house* but a number of holes, about half-a-yard square, each covered with an iron lid. But when one of these lids is lifted,

a fearful heat is shot up from beneath; such a heat as came from the furnace into which the three children were cast. Each lid covers a terribly hot furnace, and in each furnace there are put two melting-pots, or crucibles, containing about thirty or forty pounds apiece, of steel broken into small fragments. After the crucibles have been four hours in the furnace, the men begin to make preparations which show the sort of 'Fire-King' ordeal they are about to go through. They cover their legs and bodies with coarse sacking, saturated with water, and prepare the moulds which are to be filled with the melted steel. Then, one man draws off the lid of a furnace, and removes the white-hot coke from about the pot. Another takes a long instrument, acting like a pair of tongs, hovers over the furnace in a manner fearful to witness, thrusts the tongs down, grasps one of the pots firmly, and draws it up; having, all this time, his face directly over a furnace so intensely hot as to convert steel into a liquid, and drawing up, in this position, a white-hot crucible not weighing less than sixty pounds.

Another man lifts up the glowing mass, and pours the liquid steel, which is of an intense whiteness, into a mould. Showers of delicate greenish sparks shoot out from the steel during the pouring: these sparks, the terrible mouth of the furnace, the intense whiteness of the liquid steel, the glowing crucible, and the men working in this fiery element, form a fearful tableau.

This cast-steel is used for making saws, and knives, and the best kinds of steel goods: not that it is yet

ready for these purposes; it must be made red-hot and rolled; and again red-hot and tilted—that is, hammered with huge hammers, which make a deafening noise.

At last, the steel is ready for the forge. All the Sheffield forges are pretty much alike. They have a forge-fire and a block of stone with steel anvils and hammers, and some other implements. The piece of steel is heated, placed on an anvil, and hammered into whatever shape the workman wishes to produce—knife-blades or scissors. The blade is heated red-hot and plunged into cold water to harden it; next, it is gradually heated to make it elastic or to *temper it;* after which it is carried to the grinding-wheels and ground all over on a large revolving stone. There are generally many wheels together, in a large mill, worked by a steam-engine. These mills have many rooms, and in one room men grind table-knives, in another scissors, or forks, or razors, or saws; the man who makes the goods hiring the room from the mill-owner.

The grinding of forks is a most unhealthy trade; they are ground upon a stone formed of sharp white grit; the grinder sits on a stool and bends over the stone to hold the fork against it. If the stone were wetted, as in most other cases, the grinder would not be injured; but the stone is kept quite dry, quantities of sparks are given off, and the face and head of the grinder are always in a cloud of small particles of steel and gritstone, which he draws into his lungs with every breath.

Plated goods, that is, forks and spoons, jugs and teapots, made of some other metal coated over with silver, are largely made in Sheffield. At Rotherham a prettily placed town close to Sheffield, there are both steel and iron works.

The Wharncliffe Woods—a bit of the old Sherwood Forest, which at one time stretched away for one hundred miles between Nottingham and the sea,—are near the town of Sheffield.

V.—THE VALE OF YORK.

The rivers on the map of Yorkshire do not look unlike the pattern made by the veins of a leaf; the Ouse itself is the mid-rib, only that it is winding, and not straight. The Nid, Wharfe, Aire, and Don, on which the pleasant town of Doncaster stands, all bring water to it from the western moors. The Derwent collects, by many little streams, the waters of the eastern moorlands. When Mother Ouse has thus gathered all the waste waters of the county, she flows out into the wide estuary of the Humber, there to mingle with the Trent river.

We say the waste water, because that is exactly what fills the rivers. Living things use what they need of the water that comes from the clouds, and much of the rest flows off, the little streamlets here and there joining to make a river, by the river channels, away to the open sea. It would be a bad thing for the land if the rivers did not drain it in this

way. You have most likely seen fields under water in times of heavy rain; if such water were not carried off somehow, nothing could be grown on the fields; when there is not a river at hand, men find it necessary to dig channels for the water; a costly and troublesome way of getting rid of it which does not answer nearly as well as the natural rivers.

The land which is drained by a river in this way is called its *basin;* the basin takes in every bit of land from which water flows to join the river.

If you draw a line round the Ouse, so as to take in the sources of the Swale and Ure, which join to form the Ouse, and the beginnings of all its tributaries, and of all the little streams which join them, you will have the edge of your leaf, and will see exactly what is the basin of the Ouse.

Water, as you know, finds for itself the lowest place it can get, and rivers always flow in valleys: sometimes in a narrow rocky valley, just a glen; sometimes in the lowest part of a great valley, hundreds of miles wide.

The Vale of York through which the Ouse flows is between forty and fifty miles wide, and is the largest vale in England, shut in between the Pennine moors and the eastern moors and wolds. A pleasant vale it is, well covered with corn-fields and flowery meadows, and with comfortable farm-houses and pretty villages dotted about; for Yorkshire is a fertile county, thanks to its rivers.

In the very heart of this wide vale rises the most beautiful building, perhaps, in our land of England—the glorious York Minster. It would take many pages to tell of its stone carvings, and wood carvings, and beautiful painted windows, through which purple and golden light streams in upon the pillars that hold up the great arched roof far overhead, long lines of pillars, which seem to draw together in the distance, like trees in forest glades; and in all the vast pile there is scarce a niche or corner anywhere but is beautiful with the work of some cunning hand. Even in the roof, and in stray corners and high windows that no one can see, the work is still beautiful and perfect; for in the early days when this cathedral was built, men made churches beautiful, not for each other, but for God, and they knew there was no bit of moulding in any hidden place but was open to His eye; they knew too, that He approves of perfect work.

The Minster stands in the old city of York, which still has some narrow streets and ancient buildings—some parts of its old walls and towers, to tell us of its changeful history. If some old citizen of York had gone on with his quiet life in a by-street until he was even older than Methuselah, what strange histories could he tell! Let us listen to some of them, paying great heed to the feeble voice of one so very aged.

VI.—TALES OF OLD YORK.

1.—*The Roman City.*

I can scarce call to mind the early days before the Romans came. Our people had a town here, but their towns were poor things—just wicker huts, with a bank of earth round to keep off other tribes, for we were always at war with one another. You see the wolds yonder to the east; there is to this day many a mound upon them which marks the graves of our people—warriors slain in the wars.

Then the Romans came. What a people they were! They could do anything they set their minds on. We Britons held out for a long time; but who could stand up against men made of iron? They conquered us, and for three hundred years York was the great Roman city in Britain. The city has never seen the like of those days. Why, we have had the Cæsars living here—the great Emperors of the world! There was Hadrian, and the old man, Severus, who when he was too sick to ride, was carried up north on a litter before his army, to bring the wild Picts to order, and just got back to York to die.

Then there was the Emperor who took one of our own people—the lady Helena—to be his wife. That was a proud day for Britain. To say truth, we were getting used to the Romans by this time. They were a hard people, but they were fair in a way, and some of us were proud to have anything

to do with the masters of the world. What a splendid place they made of our city, with their palaces and theatres within, and their grand villas outside the walls! Most of the very walls you see round the city now were built by them. And their baths! why, there's no building in England now as big and grand as those Roman baths were, with their beautiful pavements and couches, and hot and cold water, and slaves to wait on you, all heart could wish for ease and pleasure; and all kept up by the Emperor too—nothing to pay. They were a pleasure more to my mind, somehow, than the circuses; they would turn men into these to fight the wild beasts of the forest, and all the town would go to see the sport; little children even, and fair ladies in their beautiful dresses; and they didn't care—not they—if the beast killed the man, or the man killed the beast. They were a hard people!

But this was before they had learned the faith of Christ—when there were heathen temples at every corner. The lady Helena was a Christian, and in the days of her son Constantine, who was first called Cæsar at York, there were Christian churches in the city, and we even had a bishop. There are many stories as to who first brought the good faith to Britain: perhaps it was some soldier who had seen St. Paul when he was a prisoner in Rome.

But the Romans had to leave Britain to fight a foe in their own land. You may still see traces of them in the city walls, and in the Ikenild Street which went up to Tynemouth. Some of their statues

and altars, gold ornaments, tombs, and other things, have been dug up from time to time; but there is little now left to show that—

> 'This city first by Roman hand was formed,
> With lofty towers and high-built walls adorned.'

2.—*The Saxons.*

My old head turns when I think of the times that came after the Romans left the land. We had got used to quiet ways—building, and growing corn, and following useful crafts; but we were not much of soldiers, for the Romans did the fighting for us. Then the Saxons came from over the sea. I think I see them now, with their long fair hair and blue eyes, and the terrible knives which slew and slew, until there seemed scarce any left to slay.

They wanted none of us; they wanted the land for themselves, and they got it, driving most of us, Britons, into Wales, or some other out-of-the-way corner.

Were they pleased, you say, with all the beautiful houses and buildings, palaces, and even churches, left by the Romans? Not they; fierce pagans that they were, all they did with these great works was to burn and destroy them.

But they learnt better in time. A king named Edwin arose in Northumbria, who tried to bring back something of the grandeur of the old Roman days. I have seen him many a time riding about the country with a great banner—purple and gold—

carried before him. He was a good king for Northumbria; before his days the highways were safe for nobody but armed men, but in his time a woman with a babe in her arms might walk alone from sea to sea. His kingdom reached far, both north and south; Edwin's burgh, or Edinburgh, is his name-town, and belonged to his realm.

He took the daughter of the Kentish king, Ethelbert, for his wife; she was a Christian lady, and brought Paulinus, one of the Roman missionaries who had settled in Kent, to her northern home. He had black hair and a dark skin, like many of the old Romans; but he stooped, like a man used to books, and did not hold himself like the straight soldiers of the old days.

Edwin listened to the teaching of Paulinus and his wife. A little wooden church was raised in York, and one Easter morning the king was baptized.

His wise men met to consider whether they would give up Odin and Thor, and take Christ for their God. One old man got up and said, 'So seems the life of man, O king, as the flight of a sparrow through the hall when you are sitting at meat in the winter time, with the warm fire on the hearth, but the icy rain-storm without.' He wanted a faith that would tell him what became of men when they died, so that they should not seem to go out into the cold and the dark, like the sparrow into the storm. So he and the rest of the witans (the wise men), and thousands of the people, were bap-

tized, as well as the king, as a sign they would be Christ's servants.

Then there were quiet times. Paulinus was made bishop of this city, and a handsome stone church was built, the beginning of the Minster.

But there was a fierce pagan king in middle England, Penda by name, who made war upon Edwin, and slew him. Paulinus and his monks fled, and the people took to their thunder-god once more. Then it was that the new king, Oswald, brought Aidan from Iona, and the two went up and down Yorkshire and Durham on foot, teaching the people about Christ, until Oswald, too, was slain by the pagan Penda.

But I cannot mind me of all the Saxon princes and their wars; I am an old man, very old. The last great fight, when a Saxon king was in the battle, I mind well enough. That was at Stamford Brig, close by York city; the king was Harold, the last of the Saxon kings, and a fine brave prince he was. He was only king for a few weeks though. William the Norman came over sea to take his crown away, and at the very same time his own brother, Tostig, a worthless nithing who was angered with him, brought Hardraada, the king of Norway, with many ships and men, to fight against Harold.

They marched against our city, and took it, and we might have fared badly; but Harold, the king, heard the news, brought an army up from the south, drove the invaders out of the city, and fought them in a great battle by Stamford Brig.

From seven in the forenoon till three in the afternoon did the battle rage, and the great army of Hardraada and Tostig was destroyed.

The good Harold liked not to fight his brother, and, before the battle, promised him lands and riches if he would send his men away. 'What for my friend?' said Tostig. 'Eight feet of English ground, or, as he is a tall man, ten feet,' said Harold, meaning that a grave was all he could give Hardraada. So the fight went on, and Harold conquered; but, poor king! no sooner was it over than he learned that William the Norman had landed; and, three weeks after, Harold lay dead on the field of Hastings.

3.—*Hard Times again.*

Sure no land ever had so hard a master as William the Norman was to us. The north country folk were brave, and would not give in to be conquered after the Hastings fight. The king of the Danes brought over an army to help, and all the men north of Humber rose; they marched upon York, took it, and slew the Normans who were guarding the walls. William, full of wrath, marched north with a great army; he vowed we should never forget his anger. Aire waters rose in flood to keep him out, but he brought his men into York, and from Humber to Tees, from sea to sea, did the fierce king and his army go.

They tore up the crops, they slew the cattle, they killed man, woman, and child, and set fire to every

town and village they came to. The whole north country was a desert ; for sixty miles north of York, they scarce left a roof to cover a man's head. A hard winter followed ; the snow lay knee-deep on the ground, and any who had found a hole to hide them in from the cruel Norman, fell before the hunger and cold of that winter. May York city never more see such a terrible time !

After this, the king and his knights fell to building castles to keep the country folk from rising again. You may see many of these old Norman keeps at this day up and down the country.

After all, when the conquest was made, there were only a few of these Normans in the land—the knights who lived in the castles and their men : the Saxons were never driven out, so you English people are mostly Saxons to this day.

Hard as they were to their foes—that was the way of men in those days—these Normans wished to serve God, and for the next two hundred years or more, they were busy in building grand cathedrals. Their own homes were plain enough ; they cared only to have them strong, so they were built with stone walls, six or eight feet thick ; and light and air only got in by narrow chinks, through which archers might shoot. But no such churches have ever been built in England as in the centuries after the Normans first settled here ; you may see what they could do by our own grand Minster.

They borrowed a good deal of the money for these fine buildings from the Jews, who were the

only rich people then. In nearly every big town there was a little Jew town called a Jewry, where only Jews lived ; they grew rich by lending money to the Christians, and charging a great price for the loan. I find that folk are kind to the Jews now, but in those days we hated them, not only because they were cruel to their debtors,—they were the people who had slain our Lord, so we thought no usage too hard for them.

When the first Richard was crowned, it got about that he wanted to have all the Jews in the country killed. This was not true, but everywhere the people fell on the Jews; and they who saw it can never forget the thing that came to pass in York city.

You see yon old ruin standing there by itself on a mound? That is Clifford's Tower, what is left of the castle William built. All the Jews in York Jewry shut themselves up in that tower—men and women, and tender babes (the Jews were fond to their little ones)—fifteen hundred of them. The Christians came battering against the walls ; the Jews held out while they could, and when they saw there was no hope, what did they do but set fire to the tower, and stop, every one of them, to face death in the burning building rather than fall into the hands of their foes!

4.—*The Roses.*

Don't think we had nothing but wars and troubles and hard times in York city. The Parliaments, which

always meet now in the fine new Parliament Houses at Westminster, used very often to be held at York. Those were times of gay doings in the old city—feastings and tourneys; but I scarce remember any time more joyful than when King Edward III. married his fair Queen Philippa here. It was from here, too, that she marched with the lords Neville and Percy to fight the battle of Neville's Cross.

Speaking of Philippa minds me of another queen York city has cause to remember; Margaret, queen of Henry VI., she that had the head of the Duke of York stuck on the city gates, with a paper crown to mock him for his pains, for he had thought to wear the crown of England. The king was a prisoner, but Margaret was free, and, with the help of the barons of the north, she raised an army, and met the Duke of York at Wakefield, where was fought one of the twelve bloody battles of the Roses. The queen conquered, but small was the glory, for she had four times as many men as the duke. He fell in the fight; and cruel Lord Clifford came to the place where his body lay, and struck off his head, and set on it a crown of paper, and so fixed it on a pole, and presented it to his queen, at which present was much joy; but many laughed then that soon lamented after. The queen had the head carried to York and fixed upon the city gates.

This same Clifford did another unseemly deed in Wakefield fight. While the battle was going on, the young Earl of Rutland, son of Richard of York, being scarce of the age of twelve years, 'a fair gentle-

man and a maiden-like person,' was gently and secretly led away from the field by his schoolmaster. But the two were espied by the Lord Clifford, who, in a fierce voice, asked the boy who or what he was. The young gentleman, dismayed, had not a word to speak, but knelt on his knees, imploring mercy, both with holding up his hands and making dolorous countenance, for his speech was gone for fear. 'Save him,' said his schoolmaster, 'for he is a prince's son, and may do you good hereafter.' With that word the Lord Clifford marked him, and said, 'Thy father slew mine, and so will I do thee and all thy kin.' Wherewith he raised his dagger and slew the boy. The Duke of York had slain Clifford's father in the fight of St. Albans. Three months after, this same Clifford was slain upon Towton Field by Tadcaster, struck in the throat by a headless arrow.

A terrible battle was that of Towton—such as had not been seen in England since the fight of Hastings. It began at break of day, and six hours did the fight go on, and neither side would give in—the snow falling thick all the time, and laying a white cover over the slain.

The Earl of Warwick, the mighty baron, the king-maker, he that could raise armies at his call from his own earldoms, wore the white rose of York, and led the army. He stirred up his men to fierce courage, and swore that he would conquer or die on the field. At last they of Lancaster slowly gave way, and soon every man fled for his life; all through the night they fled, hotly chased by the men of the

Yorkist army, who slew all they came upon. In the morning was a woeful counting of dead bodies on the field, nigh forty thousand slain—forty thousand! —and among them our bravest and noblest; aye, it was a dark day for the land, the day of Towton fight! And a dark and evil war for England was this War of the Roses, which left scarce a brave baron or a prince in the land, and laid our bold archers by thousands upon many a battle-field.

Margaret and Henry waited here in York while the battle raged, and when the news reached them, they fled north to Scotland. I cannot mind to tell you of all that happed between this quarrel of the Roses and the next great civil war, when King Charles I. and his people fought, army to army, up and down the land. Close by here, on Marston Moor, was one of these fights. Prince Rupert, the king's wild kinsman, after breaking the siege of Lathom House, burst over the moors and into York; and as evening came on, he drew up his men to face Cromwell's Ironsides on Marston Moor. What men the Ironsides were! England has had no such soldiers since the Roman days. The fight was fierce, but at nightfall all was over, and Rupert rode away with hardly a man at his back.

I can tell no more; if ye would know more about York city, ye must . . . .

VII.—THE SEA-BOARD.

The coast of York makes a curve from Tees-mouth, where is the busy town of Middlesbrough, to Flamborough Head, north of which it is bold and rocky. The ruins of Whitby Abbey stand on a high cliff, 250 feet above the sea, overlooking the narrow streets of this old seaport town. Jet brooches and ear-rings are made in the town, for jet is found about Whitby—a fact which shows that there was once a pine forest here, from the trees of which fell droppings of resin. Many changes have happened since; the forest and the resin-droppings have been buried under sea and under land; and, after ages in underground darkness, the resin appears again in a new form—the beautiful light smooth black jet of Whitby.

This abbey, perched upon the cliff, was founded by the Northumbrian king, Oswy. He was in great fear of the terrible Penda, wherefore, before a battle, he vowed that if he should conquer Penda, he would raise an abbey here, make the saintly Hilda the abbess, and give her the care of his baby daughter Elfleda, or Edelfled. Penda was beaten in the battle; so it came to pass that

> '. . . in the convent cell
> A Saxon princess once did dwell,
> The lovely Edelfled.'

And Hilda was a wise and holy lady, and ruled her

own abbey, and the country round, like a great princess.

Among the serfs of the Abbess Hilda was a cowherd, named Coedman. It was the custom among these Saxon people, as they sat at meat in the great hall, to pass the harp from hand to hand, and he that got the harp must needs sing; if he did not know a song, he might make one up, but sing he must. One night the harp came to Coedman, and he knew no song, and could not make one, so he left the hall amid the noisy jeers of his companions.

He went to sleep, sad at heart, and one came to him in his dreams, and bade him sing. 'What shall I sing?' said the cowherd. 'Thou shalt sing of the Creation of the World,' was the answer. Next day his dream was told to the Abbess Hilda, and she called Coedman to her, and caused one to read aloud to him the story of the Creation from the Bible. And then Coedman sang, and his song was a beautiful poem—such a poem as had never been made in the Saxon tongue. This poem of the Creation has come down to our days, and though we have many more noble, we are glad that this first poem in the English tongue has not been lost.

Scarborough, further south, is a fashionable bathing-place; it stands within a lovely bay; its pier sweeps round the harbour, and the town creeps, step by step, street by street, up a high and steep cliff, on the top of which are the ruins of a castle. It is an old town. Tostig and Hardraada landed here before

the battle of Stamford Brig, and nearly destroyed Scarborough.

There is scarcely a promontory in England that stands more boldly out to sea than Flamborough Head. The name means 'headland with the flame,' for the Danes kept a beacon-fire alight there to guide their ships upon the sea. The brilliantly white chalk cliffs, of which it is made, form a range nearly six miles long, rising in some places 300 feet from the sea. These white cliffs serve as a signal to ships at sea, both by day and night, for a revolving light flares from the point after dark.

South of this Head the shores are tame, consisting of low cliffs of clay or chalk, flat marshy lands, and sands and sand-hills. The spires and towers of the churches are often the only landmarks to the seaman. This is the coast of Holderness, which is bordered a few miles inland by the wolds– hills with a smooth bold front, from whose summits a glorious view may be had; the sea on one side, on the other the immense Vale of York, with the Minster; to the south the gleaming Humber; the dreary moorlands to the north.

From Spurn Point to Bridlington Bay—a distance of about thirty miles—the ocean is gradually gaining on the land. Half-a-dozen towns and villages have been carried away by the sea; not that it comes in with a sudden burst, and sweeps off village or town all at once; it works away steadily by day and by night; bit by bit the land is carried off, with whatever stands upon it, church or village

street. Thus the parish of Hornsea was bound to keep a certain road in order; but the sea came and carried the road away in the course of three or four years, and now the Hornsea folk are free of the expense.

Kilnsea has suffered a greater loss; the old church of the village, undermined by the sea, fell at length, and the bones out of the churchyard were at the mercy of the waves. The village stands upon a point of cliff, earthy and soft, a little higher than the low spit at Spurn. The strong, rude waves of the North Sea beating constantly against this soft cliff wear it away; now the spray of the storm beats upon the windows of the village; a few years hence, and Kilnsea will be gone, and the restless sea will still be working its way in towards the wolds. It marches in at a steady rate—two yards a year in some places, six or seven in others.

Ravenspur, a large sea-port town, once stood by Spurn Point, a town at which kings with their armies have more than once landed or taken ship, but the sea came in and swept away the buildings; the inhabitants had to seek homes elsewhere, and the very name of Ravenspur is lost off the map.

Spurn Point is a low, barren ridge of sand and shingle, with a lighthouse at the end, having the sea on one side and the Humber on the other. The sea does not carry its spoil far; the tide rushes up the Humber, bearing with it the waste from the cliffs of Holderness. When the tidal wave goes out again, it leaves the mud and stones behind; so they remain,

mud banks and shoals in the bed of the Humber, too heavy for the river to sweep out, wherefore, only pilots who know it well can navigate this estuary. Sunk Island, at the mouth of the Humber, has been raised above high-water mark in this way. It is really the fragments of the Holderness coast which the sea has laid at Humber mouth; an island no longer, it is well covered with farms and villages.

Hull, or Kingston-upon-Hull, is named after the river it stands on. It is an old town, and a great sea-port by Humber mouth. Hull trades with the whole world, chiefly with Holland, the Baltic, Sweden, and Norway. It exports the cottons of Manchester, the woollens and linens of Yorkshire, the lace and net of Nottingham; it imports large quantities of foreign wool, flax, iron, timber, tallow, grain, and other things. This port has three large docks.

DERBYSHIRE.

I.—THE PEAK DISTRICT.

THE wide-spreading moors, the Pennine chain, stretch south into Derbyshire. The whole of the county north of Castleton is a mountainous tract called the Peak district ; for the most part a stretch of high and barren moorland, where sheep find scanty pasturage. Here and there, high peaks rise above the rest, as the wild and rugged Kinderscout, with its tors, pools, and crags, and Mam-Tor, which is nearly as high. None of these peaks is quite 2000 feet in height, but the district is so broken, rocky, and wild, that it is truly mountain country. Deep, narrow valleys cross the moors, river valleys, with noisy mountain-torrents dashing through them ; thick wood grows down the slopes of the valleys to the water's edge, and high crags rise among the trees. None of these is so deep as the vale of Edale, the valley of the little River Noe, which flows across North Derbyshire to join the Derwent.

Like other high moorlands, this Peak district is swept by cold winds, mist, and rain, and, like all

other English wastes, it is full of the remains of the old British people—huts, barrows, and stone circles.

All the curious sights of the Peak district are not to be seen above ground. There are large and lofty cavern-chambers, opening into the very heart of the mountains, some of them penetrating room after room, a distance of more than half-a-mile. To explore these caverns one must have guides and torches, and surprising it is to see within, every fantastic shape dropping from the roof or rising from the floor ; now a fringe, deep and broken, now a miniature forest in stone, and now strange shapes of bird or beast.

Have we got into a palace of the gnomes, and do they spend their years in thus beautifying their chambers ?

The same unwearying artist has hewn these chambers out of the solid rock, and adorned them to suit his fantastic taste—a workman whose name you would little suspect.

Soft as rain is, and hard as some rocks are, there is none so hard but the rain will, in time, make its way through it. The mountain-limestone, of which these mountains are made, is full of cracks ; the rain does not all flow off the sides of the hills ; much of it makes its way through the cracks, down, and down, wearing away the lime as it goes, and carrying it along in its course. Sometimes the water forms for itself quite a wide channel ; indeed, in limestone districts, it often happens that a broad stream, a river, flows in at the mouth of a cavern, makes its way underground, and does not appear again for miles, and all this time the

water has been wearing away the limestone, and enlarging the caverns. Fresh droppings of water from above and little runlets from the sides help the running stream.

The water does not carry away quite all the lime it brings from the rocks. Every tiny drop that falls from the roof of a cavern carries its own grains of lime. Some grains it leaves on the roof, some grains drop upon the floor. The next drop lays a few more grains in the same place, both upon roof and floor. This goes on for ever, night and day, until at last the lime on the roof has made a sort of little shoot, like an icicle, and the lime on the floor another little shoot, rising up to meet it. There are many drops falling, side by side, and, in the course of ages, there is formed a sort of fringe, like icicles, which hangs from the roof, and a similar little pile rises from below. These limestone droppings grow very, very slowly; it has taken many hundreds of years to make the strange figures in the caverns. Those on the roof are called *stalactites*, and those on the floor *stalagmites*, two long names, taken from a Greek word which means 'to drop.' The Peak Caverns and the Bagshaw Grottos are the largest in the district.

This mountain limestone contains a treasure, besides the building-stone, so excellent that some of it was carried to London to build the handsome Parliament Houses. This treasure is veins of lead ore, which occur from the Peak, south, as far as Wirksworth, a great lead-mining place.

Pigs of lead have been found which must have

been made while the Romans held Britain,—one, which bears the name of the Emperor Hadrian.

The Saxons, too, worked the lead-mines. Perhaps they simply went on working the mines which the Romans had left, for they seem to have given its name to the Odin mine while they were still a pagan people. The Speedwell mine, the Odin mine, and the Bradwell mine, are all in the Peak.

There is always a little silver in the lead ore, but so little that it is not often worth the expense and trouble of separating it from the lead.

II.—THE DALES.

Derbyshire, like Yorkshire, is famous for its beautiful dales. But in Derbyshire the Peak sends its spurs south instead of east,—long spurs which reach into the middle of the county, and separate the river valleys.

The Derwent Valley has a range of moor-hills on the east, and is enclosed by other moors and hills on the west. A very beautiful valley it is, with Chatsworth Park, the Duke of Devonshire's place; and, further south, Matlock — among hills, Abraham Heights, which the visitors climb upon donkeys, and High Tor, a great crag with a steep face. Matlock is a fashionable place, crowded with visitors in the summer, who come to drink, and to bathe in, the warm waters of the spring.

When the underground recesses become too full to hold any more, the water is forced out in *springs:* and when the water is forced up in this way from a

great depth, the springs are warm; for the deeper we get into the earth's crust, the warmer it becomes.

The water of these springs has often an exceedingly unpleasant taste; for the underground stream, which at last breaks out in a spring, does not carry lime only with it, but iron, or sulphur, or magnesia, or soda, or whatever substance it passes through. As these substances are often *medicinal*, persons suffering from certain complaints go to such springs to drink the waters. Those of Matlock are good for consumptive and rheumatic patients.

There are two other watering-places with mineral springs in the Wye Valley, Bakewell, and Buxton, a pleasant place near the source of the river.

Wyedale is another beautiful valley, with many little glens and dells—each with its own stream—opening into it on either side. The most delightful of these vales is Dovedale. The Dove is a tributary of the Trent, which flows from Dove Head, near Buxton, where it rises, until it joins the Trent, between the two counties of Stafford and Derby. Here the cliffs overhang the river, making dark, deep-looking pools; there, they open out, the woods come down to the water's brink, great crags jut out, and the blue stream gurgles over boulders at the bottom; now it is wide, and now so narrow and shallow, it is crossed on stepping-stones.

III.—THE COAL-FIELD.

East Derbyshire is a mining district. The coal-field, which begins at Leeds, stretches south, through

the whole of Derbyshire, as far as the town of Derby : a line between that town and Nottingham shows where it ends.

The mining towns lie thick in this district,—sometimes five or six miles apart, sometimes nearly touching one another, in a zig-zag line from north to south. In many of them the flames of blast-furnaces rise, for iron ore is found with the coal.

Chesterfield, a large town, is the centre of a mining district; Staveley lies to the north of it; Ashover and Claycross, to the south. In the latter places, iron is worked, as it is, also, in a group of mining towns further south,—Alfreton, Swanwick, Ironville, Codnor Park, and Ripley.

There are large cotton-mills at Belper, on this coal-field. Glossop, quite in the north, on the borders of the Lancashire coal-field, is the centre of large cotton-works, and is the chief manufacturing town in the county. The mills of Arkwright, who invented the 'spinning jenny,' are at Crompton.

IV.—DERBY.

The land between the Dove and the Derwent is chiefly a corn-growing district, with green cattle-pastures by the rivers. The little bit of the Trent Valley—about ten miles—where that river runs through the narrow south end of Derbyshire, is also a rich, green pasture-land.

Derby stands on the Derwent, the chief river of the county, a tributary of the Trent. *Derby* means

'the town of the Derwent,' and the 'by' shows it was at one time a town held and named by the Danes. It is a busy town where many things are made,—porcelain, stockings, lace, and, most important of all, silk.

There is a bridge crossing the Derwent at the north end of Derby town, and from this bridge you get a view of a long brick building on the west bank, or rather on a little island on the river. This, you are told, is John Lombe's silk-mill.

A silk-mill is the place where raw silk is prepared for the weaver by spinning or twisting, or *throwing*, as it is called in the trade. The silk comes into the mill, a thread, and leaves it, a thread; but the thread which comes has little more strength than a spider's web, while that which leaves the mill is compact and strong, and thick enough for the weaver's use.

The raw silk comes in hanks from Italy, France, Bengal, China, and some other countries. The silk is called raw after it has been *reeled* off the cocoons: these are thrown into warm water to soften them. While they are in the water a woman gently stirs or brushes the cocoons with a rather short birch rod; the rod catches the loose ends of the cocoons, the woman draws them out of the water, takes four or five together, twists them with her fingers into one thread, and after a little more preparation, winds the thread upon a reel, taking care that the moist threads do not lie upon one another, or they would stick, for there is a good deal of natural gum in the silk.

Silk in this state, *raw* silk, is what is brought into England now; but in John Lombe's day the silk came *thrown*, or spun into threads all ready for the weaver. How to throw silk was the secret he set himself to find out.

Lombe was a clever man, clever both in making machines and in drawing plans; and we should have thought better of him had he set his wits to work to invent a way of his own. But he went to Italy to see the machines used there: the Italians would not allow him to enter their mills, so he bribed two workmen to let him in secretly, and hide him where he could watch all that was going on. He watched by day, and sat up at night to make drawings and write accounts of what he had seen.

He had just finished, when the Italians found him out, and would have killed him, but he and his two helpers escaped to a ship and sailed for England. In time, he built his mill on this island in the Derwent (1717); and English *throwsters* did their work as well as those of Italy. But the Italians were much enraged, and, it is said, sent a woman to England, who, while she was working in his mill found means to kill John Lombe by slow poison. The machines used for spinning or throwing, and for weaving the silk, are too complicated for us to describe.

The silk goods made in Derby are, ribbons, fringes and other trimmings, sewing silk, cords, tassels, gloves, and most important, stockings.

CHESHIRE.

I.

CHESHIRE is a flat county, part of the Shropshire Plain ; so flat, that Beeston Rock, with its castle on the top, can be seen all over the county, though it is less than 400 feet high. Beeston Rock is in the south-west, a little south of Tarporley. There is another low hill north of Macclesfield, Alderley Edge, which overlooks the whole of Cheshire, with its deep meadows and slow winding rivers.

Wherever you look in Cheshire, there are these same green meadows by the waterside, divided from one another by tall hedge-rows with trees, often old oaks, rising among the bushes. There are many rivers and streams in the county, and the land lies so flat that they make slow way, and twist in and out, in and out, as if they could not find slope enough to help their waters along to the open sea.

Cheshire is rather a rainy county, and when there is much rain, the rivers overflow, leaving a fine coat of river mud behind them when they get back to their own beds ; all of which is very good for the meadows.

For these reasons the chief business of the Cheshire people is to grow grass. What for? To feed the thousands and thousands of cows which may be seen grazing at their ease, or chewing the cud in sleepy fashion in the pasture fields: not in the meadows, the long, rich meadow grass, is cut and dried and made into hay for their winter food, when grass is scarce and poor. These cows are kept to make the famous Cheshire cheese, of which thousands of tons are sent away yearly; a very pleasant sight the cheese-room of a Cheshire dairy is.

Nantwich, on the river Weaver, is the chief cheese-selling town; the cheeses are made throughout the Weaver valley.

So they are, also, in the Vale of Dee, the river which comes out of Welsh mountain valleys to meander among the green meadows of Cheshire. Perhaps you know the song about 'Mary,' who was sent to—

'Call the cattle home
Across the sands of Dee:
The western wind was wild and dank with foam;—
. . . .
And never home came she.'

She never came home, because the tide rose upon her unawares, and she found herself all at once struggling in deep sea-water, with nobody by to help. Dee reaches the Irish Sea through a broad estuary, about fourteen miles long. When the tide is out, the river, a rather shallow stream here, winds its way to the sea through the sands which stretch a long way

on each side of it; but when the tide comes in, it fills the estuary, and covers the sands with sea deep enough for a ship to sail in, and woe to man or child found wandering upon them.

II.—CHESTER CITY.

Before the Dee enters its wide estuary, it sweeps nearly round the old walls of Chester. Strong and thick old walls they are, with here and there a turret, a memorial of the days when Chester was a great Roman city. These walls are two miles in circuit; they stood a siege on behalf of Charles I., which lasted from Midsummer, 1643, to February, 1646. Not till they were sore pressed by hunger, and glad to feed on the flesh of cats and dogs, would the garrison surrender. At the north-east corner is Newton's Tower, upon the top-leads of which King Charles stood with the Mayor of Chester looking on at a battle two miles away on the heath of Rowton; a sad enough sight for him, for the royal forces were defeated.

At the corner of the walls, close to the old bridge, is the large pile of the Dee Mills—mills as old as the Conquest, and famous, too, for who has not heard of the Miller of Dee?

'There was a jolly old miller once lived on the river Dee,
He worked and sang from morn till night, none was so blithe as he;
And this the burden of his song for ever used to be,
"I care for nobody, no, not I, and nobody cares for me."'

Chester is an ancient and pleasant city, full of interest, and, in some ways, unlike any other in England.

No other English town has anything like 'The Rows,'—'Galleries wherein the passengers go dry without coming into the streets, having shops on both sides and underneath.' The Rows are just a passage formed by cutting away the fronts of the first-floor rooms ; the side pavement is laid upon the top of the lowest rooms, about six or ten feet above the roadway ; the upper part of each house is again brought forward, and supported on pillars. Steps lead up to the Rows, and you walk under shelter by all the best shops of the city. The projecting house-fronts, mostly three or four centuries old, have gabled roofs, latticed windows, and cross-beams, carved and painted.

The way the streets are laid out shows that Chester, like Chichester in the south, was once a Roman camp and city. The four chief streets run north, south, east and west ; they all branch out from the same open space, and each street ends in an arched gateway.

The treasure of the city is its cathedral, which is very old, and was falling into decay ; but, quite lately, it has been made beautiful and perfect again at great cost, and with the sort of loving care which was spent upon churches in the days when the cathedrals of England were built.

Chester is the county town, and is a busy place, with iron-foundries, lead-works, and soap-works ; but we are apt to think more of the stories of its past than

of the useful works carried on there now. Hither marched King Alfred, to drive out the Danes who had taken the city, and he placed Chester, with the rest of middle England, under his daughter Ethelfleda, 'the Lady of Mercia,' and her husband.

Edgar, the sixth king after him, used to visit Chester when he made his yearly progress round England. He was a warlike king, and subdued the neighbouring princes, the kings of Scotland, of Wales, of the Isle of Man, and some others. But he was proud, and it is said, once brought eight kings with him to Chester, and made them row his boat up the Dee to the Abbey of St. John's, while he himself steered.

The Conqueror gave Cheshire to his nephew, telling him to keep it with his sword as best he could. In his time, and after, the earls of Chester lived in Chester Castle, with all the state of kings; they made their own laws, ruled their own subjects, and always had many fighting men ready to take the field. They had need of an army, for in those days Cheshire and Shropshire were border counties, and the fierce Welsh tribes would pour down upon the lowlands from their mountain hiding-places, just as the Scotch borderers did upon the northern counties. The eldest son of the King of England is now Earl of Chester.

III.—THE WIRRAL.

The Wirral is the peninsula that stands out between Mersey mouth and Dee mouth, both broad estuaries.

The Mersey divides Cheshire from Lancashire, and on the Cheshire side the bank of the river is often very pretty, as about Eastham, for instance.

Birkenhead is a busy place, with large docks, like those of Liverpool. It has a pretty park, laid out by Sir Joseph Paxton, who planned the Crystal Palace. New Brighton stands at the end of the Wirral; it has broad sands and odd-looking red cliffs, with caverns in them; great high waves, and sand-hills blown up all along the shore by the strong sea wind, and it has a lighthouse rising out of rocky mussel-beds, which are left bare at low water. All the coast of the Wirral, between the Mersey and the Dee, is bordered with sand-hills. The soil of the peninsula is sandy, a good soil for potatoes and some sorts of green vegetables, which are grown here for the Liverpool market.

IV.—WHERE SALT COMES FROM.

The Weaver, which flows through mid-Cheshire, sends its waters to the sea by the Mersey mouth. Sail up the river, and you pass boat after boat loaded with smooth blocks of white salt, or with rough lumps of rock salt, reddish or clear. All these vessels are coming down stream, and they are on their way to Runcorn, or, more often, to Liverpool, from whence their cargoes of salt are sent pretty nearly all over the world—east and west—to America and India, to Denmark, Russia, or Africa.

The boats come from Northwich, which you can

distinguish in the distance by the thick smoke-cloud rising above it. Northwich is a busy place, with many chimneys, and the chief work done there is to turn the rock salt which is brought from the mines into the pure white salt which comes to table. The rock salt is placed in shallow pans of water to dissolve; then all the water is boiled away, evaporated, and the salt remains, but not as it was before. The grains of red iron and earthy matter have gathered together at the bottom, and left the salt pure and white. The salt does not become pure the first time it is dissolved, however; the same thing must be done many times, and while the water is boiling away, the salt must be kept constantly stirred, that it may not become too hard when it dries. Now you can understand why there are many chimneys and much smoke in and about Northwich.

Where does the salt come from? At Northwich itself and at all the villages round about—Anderton, Wilton, Marston—there are salt-mines,—beautiful snow-white streets, deep underground, with white arched roofs supported on great white pillars. In a large salt-mine in Poland, there are not only streets, but houses and churches, all cut out of the solid salt. These mines sparkle and look so beautiful when they are lighted up, that people have parties in them, especially in the Marston mine, which is the largest and handsomest.

The miners go to *work*, though, not to play, in their pleasant mines; they blast the salt rock with gunpowder, and work out long galleries with their

picks, much as in other mines. The mines have made such great hollows about Northwich and under Marston village, that the ground on the surface has sunk, and many houses slope in the strangest way, and have often to be propped up to keep them from falling.

These beds of salt rock lie under the valley of the Weaver, and now and then the salt rock crops up in the river banks. A great field of salt, over a hundred and fifty miles across, lies far underground in Cheshire and about it. The beds of rock-salt are often a hundred feet thick, and in Cheshire there are two of these deep beds, one under the other, so that some of the mines are very deep. The purest, whitest salt is found in the lower bed.

How came these great salt-beds to be in Cheshire? That is a curious part of the story. Where the salt is now, there was, ages ago, a sea—a dead sea—for its waters were so bitterly salt that nothing which had life could endure them; never a tiny shell-fish, nor the pattern of any sea-weed, is to be found in the salt-rocks. So salt was this sea, that the waters could not hold all the salt dissolved, and much of it sank to the bottom and made salt-rocks.

The sun was very hot over Britain in those days; it drew up the water of this salt sea in thin vapour. But the sun is dainty; he will never drink anything but quite pure water, even out of the dirtiest ditch; he drew off the water and left the salt behind. By-and-by the layer of salt rocks at the bottom became deep, and the sea more and more shallow, until at

last there was no sea, nothing but a great stretch of salt.

Other changes came; the salt was covered with other rocks, and, after ages had passed, another salt sea lay in the place of the first, and disappeared by degrees in the same way, leaving a deep layer of salt rock behind it. In course of time, the salt was covered up by layers of other rock, and it is now mostly far underground, and is reached by deep shafts. In some parts of America there are still salt-rocks upon the surface, and the creatures come trooping from far and near to get a Salt Lick. Salt is so cheap and common in England that we do not think much of it, perhaps do not know that it is necessary to keep us in health; but it is not so plentiful in all countries; in parts of India, for instance, half-a-crown must be paid for what might be bought at home for a halfpenny.

There are many brine-springs scattered about the county—water rising from the earth, salt as pickle; at Northwich, Nantwich, the little old town of Middlewich, and some other places; the water from these brine-springs is boiled down to make table-salt. The boiling is done in much the same way as for rock-salt, only that instead of having to dissolve the rock in water to make brine in the first place, the men draw the brine ready made from the springs.

It is easy to understand where these salt-springs come from. Much of the water that comes down as rain finds its way underground. It is rather easy for this water to dissolve the salt-rock, and so make a channel for itself, but of course it carries the salt along

with it, and is no longer pure water, but brine. When the ground below becomes so filled at any particular spot that it can hold no more, the water comes out at the surface as a brine-spring.

'In many parts of Cheshire the surface is dotted with "meres," or fresh-water lakes, the haunts of rare birds and plants, and the prettiest spots to be found in Old England. In many cases, perhaps in all, these seem to have been formed by the slow settling of the over-lying rock-masses over the hollows left by the dissolving of the rock-salt beneath.' Combermere, a mile and a half long, is the largest of these. It is in a beautiful park in the south of Cheshire; others are Mere Mere, Moss Mere, Broad Mere, &c.

V.—EAST CHESHIRE.

The South Lancashire coal-field upon which Manchester stands reaches far down into the east of Cheshire, and three or four towns, which are nearly in a line from Manchester, south, are engaged in the same two great manufactures, cotton and silk.

Macclesfield, which stands on the side of a hill not far from Alderley Edge, is a great silk-making place; velvets, fringes, fancy braids, neckties, silk buttons, as well as muslins and calico, are made here. Stockport, which stands on a red rock just where the Tame and Goyt join to form the Mersey, is another silk and cotton town. Congleton, in a delightful valley, south of Macclesfield, makes cotton; and in Sandbach, a little to the south-west of it, silk is made.

Crewe, a great railway junction, where the engines and carriages of the London and North-Western Railway Company are made, is a rather dull town, with many rows of well-built, red-brick houses, one row like another, where the Company's work-people live.

Altrincham, quite to the north, is a pleasant and very healthful town, where many of the Manchester cotton lords live. About the town fruit and vegetables are grown for Manchester, especially carrots, for which Altrincham is rather famous.

The north-east corner of the county is hilly, containing part of Featherbed Moss, a bit of Yorkshire moorland.

SHROPSHIRE.

I.—THE WELSH MARCHES.

SHROPSHIRE, or Salop, is another county on the border of Wales—the Welsh *marches*. The earthen dyke raised by Offa of Mercia to keep those troublesome Welsh neighbours out is still to be seen, running nearly the whole length of the county.

The Normans built many castles, and held them against the borderers. William had given leave to certain of his barons to take and keep for themselves what land they could in this wild border county. Wherefore, for more than three hundred years after the Conquest, there were endless slayings and burnings.

Edward I. endeavoured to put an end to these troubles by conquering the country, which he did, and had David, the last Prince of Wales, tried at Shrewsbury, where he was holding court, and put to death as a traitor.

The Welsh were so sore about this, that Edward, to console them, gave them his own infant son, just born in Wales, for their Prince; at least, so the story

goes. This is why our Queen's eldest son is Prince of Wales. This was not the end of the Welsh wars. More than a century later, another Welshman, Owen Glendower, joined with the Percies of the north and the Scotch Douglas, now allies, against Henry IV. Thes tory of the quarrel is too long to tell, but it ended in a battle, fought close by Shrewsbury, in which Harry Hotspur, the brave young Percy who led the rebel army, was slain, and his party defeated.

Shrewsbury still has the keep of its ancient castle. It is a pleasant town, with an old part and a new part,—where Shrewsbury cakes are still made, and where the daughters still carry their mothers a simnel-cake on mothering Sunday.

The Severn, the queen of rivers, flows nearly round Shrewsbury. It divides the county into two pretty equal parts. The north part belongs to the Cheshire plain, and is like it in every way—the same level country, with rich meadows by the river banks; the same broad pastures with grazing cattle and scattered clumps of trees: the same pretty meres—or rather other meres on the same pattern. Ellesmere Mere, which gives its name to the town of Ellesmere, is the largest of those in Salop.

There is more corn grown on the Shropshire than on the Cheshire end of the plain. The Welsh hills make their way into the north-west corner nearly as far as Oswestry—named after Oswald, the gentle northern king, who was slain here by Penda. The Wrekin in the east, close by the Severn, is a hill which rises all by itself like Alderley Edge in Cheshire;

from the top of it as many as seventeen of the flat middle counties may be seen on a clear day.

II.—THE HILL COUNTRY.

A name that describes South Salop very well, for as many as six ranges of hills cross the county south of the Severn, running towards the south-east. The south-east corner, called Clun Forest, is not a forest at all, but is filled with hills. Wenlock Edge, which begins by Much Wenlock, is the longest range; and the Clee Hills are about the highest. Between these hill-ranges are long narrow valleys; the town of Church Stretton, which is just one long street, is in the valley between the Long Mynd and Caradoc Hills.

This part of the county is very pretty, with hills and vales, woods and corn-fields; and, quite in the south, by the counties of Hereford and Worcester, hop-gardens and great apple-orchards.

A coal-field reaches from Wellington to Bridgnorth, which is a busy and pretty trading-town on the Severn. Iron is found with the coal; and Wellington, Newport, Shifnal, Madeley, and Coalbrook-dale, are nearly as black and as busy as the adjoining Black Country itself. Coal-pits and iron-works, iron-works and coal-pits, break up the ground and blacken the air.

It seems half a pity that Coalbrook-dale, the lovely valley between the Wrekin and Wenlock Edge, should be blackened with furnace-smoke. The valley is shut in by steep, wooded hills, and little knolls,

covered with trees, are dotted all over it. At night the whole dale is lit up by the flames of the blast furnaces. A curious thing here is the way many of the houses slope ; you would think it impossible to stand upright in them ; yet they are propped up so carefully, it is plain people do manage to walk across the floors, and are not afraid their houses will shortly tumble about their ears. The fact is, the ground underneath has been so hollowed out to get the coal and iron, that the surface has sunk, carrying down the houses with it.

There is another coal-field reaching from Shrewsbury to the Welsh hills, as well as three or four smaller ones in the south-east.

Most of the mining country on the east belongs to the plain, which reaches south of the Severn, taking in all the river valley.

Seventy miles of Severn river are within Salop. It enters this shire straight from Montgomery, the Welsh county, in which are the lofty Plinlimmon mountains, where our queen of rivers first gathers her waters. She collects some tributary streams on her way through Shropshire ; the chief are the Tern, on the north, and the Teme, on which the bonny town of Ludlow stands, on the south.

III.—TALES OF LUDLOW CASTLE.

Perhaps there is hardly a prettier place in England than Ludlow. The old town stands on a woody knoll, from which you see the Clee Hills on the east,

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LUDLOW CASTLE. P. 111.

Corve Dale on the north, hills to the west which stretch, row after row, as far as the eye can see, and the beautiful Teme valley exactly below you. Looking back you see the Teme getting prettier and tinier—a thread of silver—until it is lost in a rocky ravine.

Close by the town, from a line of steep rocks, rise the grey towers of the castle, which stands on a headland, and looks as if it were part of the rock into which it is built; square towers, joined by a high, embattled wall, and within, the square old Norman keep, rising more than 100 feet above the rest, and covered with ivy to the top. The dungeon in this keep is still to be seen, with an opening in the chamber above, through which the prisoners were let down.

Edward IV. chose this castle to be the palace of his young son, Edward, Prince of Wales; and here all the business of the Principality was conducted. When the King died, the Prince, twelve years old, was holding a mimic court at the castle.

Rules for the boy's daily conduct were drawn up by his father shortly before his death: that young Edward was to go to prayers in the chapel every morning; what he was to do 'at school,' his meals, and his sports. At his hour of meat the direction is, 'that there be read before him noble stories, as behoveth a prince to understand;' and that whatever is said in his presence shall be 'of virtue, honour, cuning (knowledge), wisdom, and deeds of worship, and nothing that shall move him to vice.'

Poor little Prince! We cannot know whether his father's careful training would have made him a noble king. At Ludlow he was proclaimed King of England, by the title of Edward V.

Three months after he and his brother Richard disappeared. By-and-by whispers got about that their uncle, Richard of Gloucester, had had the princes smothered in London Tower.

Another boy of twelve had his home in Ludlow Castle: Philip Sidney, afterwards the Sir Philip Sidney, of whom Queen Elizabeth said he was the brightest jewel in her crown. His father, Sir Henry Sidney, was lord of the Marches—that is to say, he looked after the affairs of Wales for the Queen. So, though his home was Penshurst, in Kent, he lived at Ludlow Castle for the time, and sent Philip to school at Shrewsbury. Here is a bit of the first letter his father wrote him while he was at school :—

'I have received two letters from you, one written in Latine, the other in French, which I take in good part, and will you to exercise that practice of learning often; for that will stand you in most stead in that profession of life you are born to live in. And since this is my first letter I ever did write to you, I will not that it be all empty of some advice, which my natural care of you provoketh me to wish you to follow, as documents to you in this your tender age.

'Let your first action be the lifting of your mind to Almighty God by hearty prayer, and feelingly digest the words you speak in prayer, with continual

meditation and thinking of Him to whom you pray, and of the matter for which you pray. Be humble and obedient to your master, for unless you frame yourself to obey others, yea, and feel in yourself what that obedience is, you will never be able to teach others how to obey you. Well, my little Philip, this is enough for me, and too much, I fear, for you.

'Your loving father, so long as you live in the fear of God.

'H. SIDNEY.'

We do not know what kind of man the young Prince Edward would have become, but Philip Sidney grew to be all, and more than all, his father would have him. Never was Englishman more beloved or more mourned for than he. Three hundred years have passed since his early death, and his name is still dear to English people: we care about Ludlow Castle chiefly because there he and his noble brothers and favourite sister hunted and hawked, read and talked, and spent many a merry day in the woods, or fishing in the Teme.

WORCESTERSHIRE.

I.

A RICH and pleasant county,—a broad valley bordered by hills on each side. On the east are the Clent and the Lickey Hills; on the west, the Abberley Hills and the Malvern Hills. These last would be one range, running from north to south, but that they are parted by the pretty valley of the Teme,—on its way to join the Severn,—a river bordered by hop-gardens and orchards.

Apple-orchards and pear-orchards, hop-gardens and golden cornfields,—look, from any of the hills, over Worcester county, and these are what you see; scarcely a bit of waste common anywhere. All that is left of the forest which once covered the county is a pleasant clump of trees here and there, and a single bit of forest-land on the Salop border.

But what is that deep-green dip in the middle of the broad valley, running right through the county from north to south,—surely that is water gleaming at the bottom? That is the Vale of Worcester, which is only about a mile across; and the gleaming water

is no less than Queen Severn herself, which comes out of Salop to take her gentle course through the middle of this shire: the deep green of the flowery meads tells of river-floods and dressings of river-mud.

To the south-east of the county, you may trace just such another deep-green vale. Not a straight vale, this time,—in and out, round about, it goes, here and there flanked by hills and woods. That is the beautiful Vale of Evesham, the valley of the winding Avon—the Warwickshire Avon—which joins the Severn at Tewkesbury, on the Gloucester border.

To Evesham Vale belongs the end of the story begun on the heights of Lewes. Henry III., taken prisoner in the battle of Lewes, was confined by the barons in Worcester Castle. His son Edward contrived to escape from the soldiers who were guarding him, and raised an army, with which he marched to Worcester to liberate his father.

Simon Montfort and the barons' army met him in Evesham Vale, and a great fight followed. The barons placed the king—vizor down—in front, hoping he would be killed by his own friends; but he cried out, 'I am Henry of Winchester; kill not your king!' The prince heard, and rushed into the thick of the fight to save his father; the king was rescued, the barons' army defeated, and the noble de Montfort and his son both fell on the field.

Evesham, with its wooden houses, is a pleasant town in the beautiful vale; so, also, is Pershore,—*Pear*shore it ought to be called, for it got its name in Saxon days from the pear-orchards about it.

On the other side of Severn, and just under the Malvern Hills, is Great Malvern, the waters of whose wells—Holy Well and St. Ann's Well—are good in certain complaints. The pleasant air of the hills is good for sick and well; so every summer brings many visitors to Malvern, and great fun it is to see these trying to urge their donkeys to the tops of the hills, with donkey-boys shouting at their heels.

Let us make our way back to the bank of Severn, and watch the barges going down the river. Worcester is on the opposite bank, but we may see the noble cathedral and the red houses of its cheerful streets. The city 'prentices no longer grumble because they get over-much salmon; time was when masters pledged themselves not to give their lads this fish for dinner oftener than twice a-week; Severn is still bountiful with her fish, but this, the noblest and most delicious, has grown scarce and dear.

See! there is a barge, from the city, piled high with hop-pockets; hops from all the country round are sold at Worcester, or at Stourport, higher up the Severn. There are barges laden with corn-sacks, with apples, with pears, with casks of perry, or of cider, made from the pears and apples, with sacks of wool. Yonder is a barge with a delicate freight,—the beautiful porcelain made in Worcester, about which we must hear more. The gloves, which employ most of the city work-people, being small and light, are sent away by rail.

There are barges laden with iron things, which come from the north,—by the Black Country,—from

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Stourbridge, or Stourport, on the little river Stour, which there joins the Severn.

The carpets of Kidderminster (which is also on the Stour) are mostly sent away by rail.

There, again, are our old friends, the salt-barges. Where do they come from? From Droitwich, which is joined to the Severn by a canal, and where there are brine-springs from the deep, underground salt-bed. Droitwich is a busy, smoky place, where many thousand tons of salt are prepared and sent down the Severn every year,—a place which has been busy thus, preparing salt, for centuries. The Romans paid their soldiers partly with the salt of Droitwich; that is how we get our word 'salary' (from *sal*, salt), for the payment for work; though now-a-days salt is so cheap, we cannot say worse of a lazy fellow than that he does not earn his salt.

All these barges—many of which, by the way, you are not likely to see at one time—are making their way to Bristol, the great port of the Severn, from which the goods will be sent over sea, or to ports on our own coast. The Severn carries barges, or larger vessels, all through the county; so does the Avon; and there are canals to enable boats to get to these rivers from places at a distance.

We must say a little more about Worcester porcelain, and about one other thing made in this county, which is to be seen in everybody's house.

II.—WORCESTER CHINA.

The old cathedral city of Worcester stands in the midst of the fertile Severn valley, on the east side of the river. It is a busy town upon market-days, for the hops of the district are brought here for sale. The city has manufactures, also, of gloves, and the beautiful Worcester china.

The secret of making porcelain was known in China for many centuries before the potters of Europe found it out: and the beautiful little cups which sailors brought from the East, thin and delicate,—so clear that you could see the light through, and with various odd figures painted on them in bright colours, came to be known as 'china.'

Our English porcelain is made at the Staffordshire potteries, at Derby, and some other places. That of Worcester has long been noted for its great beauty. It is made of burnt flints, burnt bones, Cornish clay (that is, the white *china clay* which is only formed by the wearing away of granite rocks), and broken china.

Each of these is ground down to a powder finer than flour, and each powder is mixed with water to the thickness of cream, all the creams are mixed together, and the 'slip' is strained through the finest possible silken sieves. The drying, the kneading, the throwing, the moulding, and the baking of this 'biscuit,' are all done in much the same way as for earthenware, except that ornaments in china have

often raised flowers, fruits, figures of animals, or other beautiful designs upon them.

When this is the case, the modeller first makes a model of the ornament in clay, shaping every flower or leaf with the greatest care; then a hollow mould is made upon the clay model, the slip is poured into the hollow mould, and both are put into the kiln. When the slip has been fully dried and baked, the mould, which is often in many pieces, is taken off, and the china ornament is found complete inside.

Perhaps the most interesting sight in the china-works is the painting rooms,—long rooms with many windows, beside each of which sits an artist drawing, with camel's-hair pencils, some beautiful form upon cup or plate. The colours used are made from metals, and look dark and dull before they have been exposed to the heat of the kiln. Powdered glass, or some other substance which heat will melt and convert into glass, is mixed with the colours, and helps to give their beautiful shining brightness and smoothness to the paintings.

When the pictures have been well baked in, the vessels are dipped in a glaze, a kind of liquid glass, the sort of thing which Palissy laboured to discover, because it makes the porcelain hard, smooth, and bright.

Porcelain is so much more delicate than earthen-ware, that far greater pains have to be taken with the mixing and baking, the painting and glazing; and the beautiful ware is therefore costly.

III.—HOW NEEDLES ARE MADE.

It is a curious thing that nearly all the needles used in England and the colonies, as well as in a great part of Europe, are made in an out-of-the-way village in a farming county.

The pretty village of Redditch, at the foot of the eastern hills, has about a dozen factories, or mills, where perhaps seven or eight thousand persons—men, women, and children—are employed in needle-making. The mills are large buildings with long rows of windows, like other factories, and with steam-engines to turn the wheels on which the needles are ground. But most of the processes are performed by hand, some of them at the cottages of the needle-makers. Some thirty different things, by thirty different people, are done to each needle before it is ready for use; and it is marvellous how quick each person is in doing the particular bit of work he is accustomed to.

Steel wire, of the proper sizes for needles, is sent from Sheffield to Redditch. A workman takes about a hundred wires into his hand, and with a strong pair of shears cuts them into pieces, just long enough to make two needles. These are made red-hot in a furnace, and then rolled over and over with a sort of steel rolling-pin until they are quite straight.

Then the wires go to the pointer, who grinds each end to a sharp point. The pointing-room has many small grindstones, all turning round at a wonderful rate —two thousand times a minute. The grinder sits on

a stool or 'horse,' and bends over the stone. Over his mouth he wraps a large handkerchief, and as he can do his work nearly as well in the dark as in the light, he is sometimes only to be seen by the bright cone of sparks which come from the steel he is grinding. His face looks pale, and we know he is doing work which will soon kill him; the sparks and the dust from the steel and the grindstone bring on a disease called 'grinder's asthma.' The grinders get high wages and do but little work, because their calling is so dangerous, though recent inventions have lessened the danger somewhat.

The pointer takes fifty or a hundred needle-wires in his hand at once, and twirls them round against the revolving stone. So rapid are his movements that he can get through ten thousand in an hour. The next thing is to pierce two holes through each wire—the eyes of the two needles. The wires are laid, one by one, under a heavy stone stamping machine with a little raised die upon it, the size of a needle's eye, which makes a groove where the eye should be; the workman works this machine with his foot, and places the needle-wires with his hand; though each has to be done separately, he stamps eight thousand needles in an hour.

Then a boy pierces the eye through, and another boy runs wires through the two holes, so that there is a row of needles on each wire something like a comb; the lengths are broken between the two wires, and instead of double, there are single needles.

Next, women and girls straighten them once more

with many taps from little hammers; they are drilled, tempered, polished, and more is done to them than we have time to describe before they are sorted into packets for sale.

IV.—WORCESTER FIGHT AND BOSCOBEL.

Charles II., son of the unhappy king, Charles I., in whose cause so many battles had been fought on English ground, marched down from Scotland with an army to claim the throne which had been his father's. He took Worcester city, and was there proclaimed king. But Oliver Cromwell marched against him; a battle was fought at Red Hill, outside the city; hundreds of the king's friends fell, and thousands were made prisoners. Shameful to tell, these were sent by Cromwell down the Severn to Bristol, and, Englishmen though they were, were there sold as slaves and carried over sea to toil under the lash in America.

The old timbered house may still be seen in Worcester where the king was entertained before the battle, and to which he escaped when the fight was over. Not too soon, for one of Cromwell's friends was upon his track; he had only time to escape by the back-door as his pursuer got in by the front. He did escape, however, and his friends led him to Boscobel near the Salop border. Boscobel is only a small, timbered house, at that time the home of a servant,—a forester named William Penderell, who lived there with his four brothers, his wife, and his

mother. They all knew the king's secret; knew, too, that Cromwell had offered money enough to make them rich for life, to whoever should betray the fugitive. But the Penderells were trusty, loyal folk: they hid the king in their house by night, and in the day, they brought him to a safe retreat in the forest, where he concealed himself in the bushy branches of an oak; the 'Royal Oak,' it has since been called. While he was there, Cromwell's men scoured the country in pursuit, and one party passed under the very tree and walked round it, while the trembling king was safe, hidden by the thick foliage.

Charles got safely out of the country and away to France. Afterwards, when he was restored, he entered London in Royal State on the 29th of May, his birthday; and his friends wore branches of oak in hat or girdle, in token of their gratitude to the oak of Boscobel. Wherefore,—

> 'The twenty-ninth of May
> Is oak-apple day,'

though the king hid in the oak early in September—not in May.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

I.—THE VALES.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE is an easy county to describe; it consists of vales, forests, and hills. The forest lies to the west of Severn; the vales are, Severn Valley, running through the county, and a bit of the Avon Valley, which crosses it at the north; the hilly country fills up all the east part of the county.

The bit of Avon Valley, or Vale of Evesham, in the north, is, like the same vale in Worcester, green and fertile; and most fertile and beautiful are also the two parts of Severn Valley.

The Severn enters this county at Tewkesbury, a long way, seventy miles, from the sea; yet the tide-wave from the Atlantic comes in with such force, it is felt thus far up.

Tewkesbury is a busy little town, where stockings are made. In a field close by was fought the last battle, save one, of the long and bitter wars of the Roses.

Henry VI. was a prisoner in the Tower of London, and Edward IV. had been crowned, when Queen

Margaret, the wife of Henry, came over the sea with an army. They sailed up the Severn, and every day old friends joined the queen, who was full of hope she should win back the crown for her husband and her young son Edward, who was with her. But Edward IV. met her at Tewkesbury, and a terrible battle followed. The queen's friends held out long and well, but earls and knights, and 3000 men fell on that bloody field. The queen herself was taken prisoner; some say that her son was killed while flying from the field, but others, that he was taken before Edward, who struck him in the face with his steel glove, and allowed the boy to be slain in his sight.

Margaret's spirit was broken at last; she never again attempted to raise the English people; she was confined for a while, and when set at liberty, went to Anjou to live with her old father.

The Severn Valley, as far south as the city, is called the Vale of Gloucester—a most fertile valley, about eight miles wide, where little is to be seen but waving corn-fields and pleasant villages nestling among fruit trees. It is bordered on the east by the Cotswold Hills; under the hills is Cheltenham, with its wholesome springs and its baths—a pleasant holiday place, which is usually crowded with visitors. Large ships come up the Severn as far as Gloucester, a busy trading town, sending its cargoes mostly to the Baltic Sea, from which the ships bring in deal-wood, turpentine, and corn, while they carry away salt, iron goods, and various other products. Gloucester is an ancient city, with a beautiful ca-

thedral. One thing we care to remember about the city is, that in Gloucester streets, amongst his own people, the good Bishop Hooper was burnt at the stake with cruel torments, in the persecution under Queen Mary.

South of Gloucester, the Severn Valley is called the Vale of Berkeley, from the old market-town of Berkeley, with its castle on a hill which overlooks the river—a castle to which a pitiful tale belongs. Here ended the life of Edward II., a king, like Henry III., who cared only for his own pleasure and for his favourites, but not at all for the weal of England. The barons rose against him, and compelled him to sign a paper, by which he agreed that his young son should be king in his stead. This was only fair, but a wicked deed followed: the king was shut up in a little lonely chamber, with thick stone walls, which still may be seen in Berkeley Castle, and there he was murdered in such a terrible way that his shrieks could be heard in the town. This deed was not done by the barons, but by ruffians sent by his wicked wife.

The Severn is a broad and noble river here, with sailing ships, steamers, and barges upon its waters; it can hardly be called a river, however, it is a wide estuary, by which the sea makes its way far into the land, while the Severn still flows through it down to the sea.

Berkeley Vale—not more than half as broad as the more northern Vale of Gloucester—on the east bank of the river, is still shut in by the Cotswold

Hills. It is a prettier valley, with wooded hills dotted about; many cows feeding; low, deep-green meadows by the river-side, and apple and pear-orchards beyond these. Cider and perry, excellent Gloucester cheese, and delicious butter, are made in Berkeley Vale.

II.—BRISTOL CHANNEL AND BRISTOL TOWN.

It is a rather odd fact that Gloucester has three Avons, all of which flow into the Severn—the Warwick, or Stratford Avon in the north; another Avon in the south, which has come through Wilts and Somerset, called the Bristol Avon, because Bristol stands upon it; and a third Avon, the Little Avon, on which Berkeley stands.

The coming in of the tide causes a strange change in the Bristol Avon. At low water, it is a shallow, brawling stream, that will scarcely carry the smallest boat. When the tide comes in, big West Indiamen and the largest steamers glide right up to the city. When ships arrive at low water, they wait for the returning tide to carry them up to Bristol. They do not venture up with the spring-tide, however, which rises fifty feet high at Avonmouth. A strange and awful sight the rising of the spring-tide—a very high tide, which occurs twice a-month at new and full moons—is in the Severn. Often while the stream is flowing calmly, and the waters scarcely show a ripple, a low, sullen roar breaks on the ear, getting louder and nearer every moment, till a hill of water,

with a white ridge of foam, comes rolling up fast, tossing the barges and boats about in all directions. This hill of water is called a 'bore,' and seems to be caused by the fact that the river channel slopes in such a way as to keep out the sea for a bit; presently the tide-wave makes its way round the corner, and up rush the waters with tremendous fury.

Bristol is a busy port, with many ships coming and going and lying in harbour. To make more room for these, the Avon has been turned out of its bed for some two miles, and a new channel dug for it. The old channel, filled with water, is used as a harbour, and with that and its long quay, Bristol can give quiet lodgings to more than a thousand vessels. Bristol has need to make room for the good ships that throng her busy port—ships from the Indies with sugar and cotton, spices, and strange foreign fruit; ships from Cork, with bacon and live pigs, butter, and eggs; ships from Spain and the Levant, with dried fruits and wine, oranges and wool; from South America, with hides, wool, and tallow; from Africa, with ivory and gums; from China and the far East, with silk and tea, preserved ginger, sugar and spice, and all things nice. It would be hard to name the part of the world which does not send cargoes to Bristol, or whither she, in return, does not send the hardware of the Black Country, salt, coal, and other west-country produce, that has been brought down the Severn, or carried to Bristol by road or rail. Bristol sends out her own goods also; she is a busy town, where ships are built,

sugar is refined, soap and glass and various other things are made; an old town with a long history, dating back to Roman days, when Bristol was an important camp and city.

So close as really to be part of the city, is Clifton, with its warm springs and breezy downs, with the Avon flowing past them, through a narrow chasm in one place, over which is a suspension-bridge. Clifton is a gay, fashionable place; a contrast to the mining villages on the other side of the town. The Avon runs through the wide Bristol coal-field, the most southerly in England, which reaches down far into Somerset. Much of the town of Bristol is in the county of Somerset. Beyond the town, the broad opening from the Atlantic into which the Severn falls, is known as the Bristol Channel.

III.—THE COTSWOLD HILLS.

The Cotswolds run from end to end of the county, and divide the basin of the Severn from that of the Thames. Their hill-ranges and valleys nearly fill the eastern half of the county, being in some places from twenty to thirty miles across. The short grass with which they are covered feeds countless flocks of sheep; a breed famous both for fine wool and good mutton. The highest point is Cleeve Cloud, near Cheltenham (about 1000 feet), by which the old Roman Ermine Street passes, on its way north from Cirencester. Cirencester was the chief town in the west country in Roman days, and here four great roads met: the

Fosse, Icknield Street, Ermine Street, and another. Roman urns and vases, coins, and bits of pavement are still dug up, and there are traces of the Roman walls of the city. But Cirencester was a great and famous place before even the Romans came, says the story. Gormund, an African prince, laid siege to the town. Seven years he kept his army before it, but never a step the nearer was he to the inside of its gates. At last it occurred to Gormund that if he could but set fire to the thatched roofs, the people would be in such a bustle to put the fires out, he and his army would have leisure to scale the walls. Those were days before gunpowder was 'born or thought of;' but Gormund was not without a plan: he set his soldiers to catch sparrows, fixed lights to their tails, and let them loose. Away flew the poor birds to their nests under the thatched roofs; the thatch blazed up, the townsfolk rushed to put out the flames, and the crafty Gormund got into the 'City of Sparrows.'

West of Cirencester—in which carpets are made—in pretty vales, surrounded by hills, and watered by streams which flow into the Severn, are the towns where the famous west-country broadcloth is made. Stroud is the chief of them; and there are long white mills by dark-coloured streams in many of the towns and villages around,—Minchinhampton, Stonehouse, and others. The finest broadcloth is made in this county, Wilts, and Somerset.

The most notable thing about the Cotswolds is that they have the honour of giving birth to the Thames.

About three miles from Cheltenham two brooks rise, one from several openings, at a spot called the Seven Springs. The spot is a lovely dell, overhung with trees, at the foot of Leckhampton Hill. 'Here,' says the woman who shows the place, 'be the springs from which comes the great river Thames, which is called Isis till it gets past Oxford. Here they be, seven of 'em—one, two, three, four, &c. And they never run less in the driest summer, and never are frozen in winter. How thankful ought us to be for such a plenty of good water!' It gushes freely out of the rock, clear and pure as crystal, cool and grateful to the summer rambler. After a few whirls it starts upon its course, as if impatient to reach the objects in its path: seats of learning, homes of poets, royal palaces and castles, old baronial halls, and the great world of London, bearing its shipping to the sea. In about a mile the brook from Seven Springs is joined by another from Allen Farm, and the two together make the small river Churn. It flows to Cricklade, twenty miles off, where the Isis or Thames from Wiltshire is met.*

Not only does the Thames draw its waters from the Cotswolds, but its feeders—the Evenlode, Windrush, Leach, and Coln, also take their rise in these hills.

IV.—DEAN FOREST.

This, after Windsor Forest, and the New Forest in Hants, is the largest of our English forests; and

* From *The British Islands*, J. Milner, M.A.

here oak and beech are grown for the dockyards where the ships for the navy are made. It is a busy mining country, too : a coal-field stretches right under the Forest, and iron is found with the coal. This part of Gloucester, west of Severn, has furnaces and coal-pits among forest-glades. Lidney and Coleford are very busy coal and iron towns. The district is pretty and hilly—especially by the banks of the beautiful Wye.

HEREFORD AND MONMOUTH.

I.

THE two last counties on the Welsh 'Marches,' where the ruins of many stern old Norman keeps tell of land taken and held by the sword. Monmouthshire was more a Welsh than an English county until the reign of Henry VIII., who settled the division of the counties for the last time, and made Monmouth and the whole of Hereford, as it now stands, part of England.

Herefordshire is quite English in every way, but Welsh is still spoken in the west and north of Monmouth; and the outlandish names on the map have been given, not by the Saxons, or English, but by the Britons, or Welsh. More than half these names begin with *Llan*, the Welsh word for church,—perhaps, in the days of early British Christianity, there was a church in each such place. Other names begin with *Aber* (river-mouth). Hard to say as many of the names are, they usually have a meaning which describes the place.

Offa was the first Saxon prince who took Hereford from the Britons. He carried his famous Dyke—an

earthen mound with a ditch—down to the borders to keep the Welsh back. But they gave the Saxon princes little peace. In the time of Harold, they burst into Hereford, under their half-savage prince, Gryffith, and burnt the city and cathedral; upon which Harold made a law that any Welshman found on the English side of the Dyke should lose his right hand for his pains.

When the Normans came, they built castles up and down Hereford; and in Monmouth, the ruins of not fewer than five-and-twenty Norman keeps are still to be seen.

Monmouth was in those days really a Welsh county, and each baron had just what land he was able to take for himself, and guard from his own castle. In no part of England are there the remains of so many old keeps as between the fair sister-rivers, Usk and Wye.

Some people say, Usk, some say, Wye, is the prettier of these two lovely rivers, which both join their waters with those of the Severn in the Bristol Channel. They flow, side by side, through Monmouth, and between them are ten or twelve miles of country, which is like a garden,—so fair and fertile is it with apple-orchards and corn-fields, pear-orchards, hop-gardens, and deep green meadows; with woods, and hills, and vales, watered by many streams which join Usk on the one side, or Wye on the other.

The Wye belongs equally to both counties. It rises in Plinlimmon, close by Severn, and into the Severn mouth it flows. But Severn takes a grander

sweep than the modest Wye, which enters Herefordshire out of Wales, and flows across the county to the city of Hereford through a wide and lovely valley. The city itself is pleasantly placed on a hill, and the beautiful cathedral stands by the river.

Many notable events have taken place in this old city. Among the rest, here—along with many others of Queen Margaret's friends—was beheaded Owen Tudor, a Welsh gentleman, who had married 'Kate,' the widow of Henry V., and who was the ancestor of our great Tudor kings and queens. He was beheaded because he was among the prisoners taken by the Yorkists at Mortimer's Cross, where one of the great battles of the Wars of the Roses was fought. The Queen's party was defeated. A pillar marks the battle-field, which is about six miles from Leominster.

After it leaves Hereford, the Wye goes in and out, and round about, but does at last make its way southward to Ross, on the Gloucester border. So far, it has been flowing between wooded banks bordered by green meadows, with hills now coming close up to its banks, now retreating. Much as the river-sprite has done to please hitherto, she out-does herself between the towns of Ross and Monmouth, perhaps the most beautiful bit of river-valley in England, where the Wye, overhung by trees, makes endless loops and windings round great masses of rock. From the two Doward Hills, which it flows round, four or five river-lines may be traced,—different rivers you might think,

until you follow the windings of these ins and outs of Wye.

It is not only Wye valley which is thus beautiful and fertile; there is scarcely any waste land in the whole county: stand on level ground, and you think the country all round is one great garden,—what with the tall hops, the waving corn, and the green crops—crops of one kind or other growing even between the rows of fruit-trees in the orchards. From a hill, you might suppose the whole country a forest,—what with the actual woods scattered about, the bushy hedges between the fields, and the apple-trees and pear-trees everywhere; but, look round from such a hill in the *spring*, and you are sure that the shire of Hereford is one huge orchard, white with pear, or rosy with apple-blossom.

Do the children eat all the apples and pears? Not exactly, else there would soon be no children left! The juice is pressed out and made into cider and perry,—as good as any wine made from the grapes of the Rhine or of Southern France. The best of this is bottled by the Bristol merchants, and sent away to be sold to the rich citizens of America.

The cattle of Hereford are famous, and so are the sheep; but the folk of this shire are so busy about their crops that they have no time to make butter and cheese, even for their own use, so get what they need from neighbouring counties.

The towns of this county are, as you will suppose, simply market-towns. Ledbury and Bromyard are

both old towns, with the top story of the houses hanging over the lower story, and both stand among orchards and hop-grounds.

Leominster, or, as the people call it, Lem'ster, which stands on the Ley, a tributary of Wye, is a pleasant, busy town, with a curious, old, carved Butter-cross, where Herefordshire butter was sold in the days before fruit-trees were much grown in the county. Kingston, on the western border, is also a market-town.

A range of hills crosses the north-west corner; and here are the ruins of the famous old castle of Wigmore, and, near it, those of Brampton-Bryan, which was, during the Civil War, held through a long siege by a brave lady. The Lady Brilliana Harley held this castle, not for the King, but for the Parliament. For more than a month her near neighbour, Colonel Lingen, who was on the King's side, sat before the castle with a force of six hundred men, making vain efforts to batter or burn down the walls, or in any way to gain an entrance.

Finally, the Royalists were obliged to withdraw. Lady Harley, who had been brave, wise, and cheerful while the danger lasted, broke down when it was over,—it had been too much for her. She wrote to her son that if the castle had to bear another siege, she was sure the Lord would deliver her from its trials. She died the next day.

Sure enough, the next spring brought another siege; at last cannon-balls tore down the walls, and Sir Robert Harley, the lady's husband, who had been

absent during the previous attack, and her three young children, were made prisoners.

The year wore on ; Naseby fight was fought ; the King was no more ; the country was a Commonwealth under the rule of Cromwell. Brampton Bryan was in ruins ; and, to make up to him for this great loss, Parliament gave Sir Robert Harley most of the lands of his old neighbour, Colonel Lingen, who had laid siege to his house in the King's name. Here follows the pleasantest part of the story. Edward Harley, Sir Robert's son, visited the wife of Colonel Lingen, showed her the description of the lands which had been bestowed on his father and himself, presented her with the title-deeds, and so gave up all right and title to the estate.

When we consider that the siege laid by Colonel Lingen had cost him the life of his brave mother, we can estimate how great this act of forgiveness was on the part of Edward Harley.

The Black Mountains of Wales enter the south-west corner of Herefordshire ; three or four ranges run side by side, with narrow valleys between them, watered by streams ; the widest of these is called 'Golden Valley.' Though sometimes grand in their aspect, these Black Mountains are bleak, only yielding food for sheep, with a patch of oats here and there.

II.—MORE ABOUT MONMOUTHSHIRE.

When the Wye reaches Monmouth, it becomes a border river, dividing the shires of Monmouth and Gloucester. Monmouth is a very old town, standing with its ruined castle, in a nest of hills, where the *Mon*now joins the Wye. This ruined castle was once the gay home of princes. Here Henry IV. best liked to dwell, and here his great son, Henry V. (Harry of Monmouth), was born. The ruins of the very room are shown, and even a queer, ancient cradle in which the little prince is said to have been rocked.

The Wye winds less here than in Herefordshire, but it is no less lovely; the prospect is very fair from Beacon Hill, which rises close by the west bank of the river.

Lower down is Tintern Abbey, beautiful for situation, close by a loop in the river, embowered among trees, and most perfect in itself, with 'forms of beauty' in arch and column not to be forgotten. Save that it has lost its roof, the Abbey is nearly as perfect as when the monks of yore chanted within its walls. To this old Abbey we owe a very delightful poem. Mr. Wordsworth tells us that many a time after he had visited it, the memory of beautiful Tintern would rise, 'in lonely rooms, in hours of weariness,' like a picture in his mind; and that whenever this sweet memory came, it refreshed him and made him feel both glad and kind.

Chepstow stands at the mouth of the Wye,—a

mouth wide enough open to let in the tide, and such tides as the spring-tides here are, when the sea rushes in, bearing all before it, often rising to a height of sixty feet!

The old castle of Chepstow, with its great, thick walls and lofty towers, rises from a rock overhanging the Wye. This fortress, too, has its tale to tell of a brave defence during the Civil War. Cromwell himself was driven back by Sir Nicholas Kemys, who fought for the King with a little body of a hundred men. They held the fort bravely until there was no more food within the walls, and there was no choice left but to starve or to yield. Even then they thought that the Wye would befriend them,—that they could escape by a boat which they had hidden for such a time. But a Roundhead soldier spied the boat, swam across the river with a knife between his teeth, cut the cable, and brought the little craft away. So they held out, until, at last, the fortress was forced, and Sir Nicholas himself and half his men were slain in the assault.

Large vessels come up the Wye as far as Chepstow, which is rather busy about this shipping, and is also a market-town.

Newport, at the mouth of Usk river, where also the spring-tides rise high, is a much busier port,—a port which sends out coal and iron, and all kinds of iron and steel goods; for West Monmouth, where the people speak the Welsh tongue and have Welsh ways, is a Black Country. The puddlers may be seen at work in hundreds of fiery furnaces, and

many blast-furnaces, like little volcanoes, belch out flames.

It is a mountain country. Several ranges of bare hills run from end to end of this western piece of Monmouth, and between them are valleys watered by streams; and below the hills are the coal-measures,—a piece of the great South Wales coal-field. Iron is found, also; so there are many mining villages, as well as some large towns, where both iron and steel are manufactured, and where all kinds of iron and steel goods are made,—Tredegar, Blaina, Pontypool, and Newport itself.

There are coal-mines and iron-works near Abergavenny, too, which stands among the Usk meadows, and in a nest of hills; but it is chiefly noted as a market-town.

The Usk comes straight into Monmouth out of Wales, and does not enter any other English county. It has upon its banks the ancient towns of Caerleon and Usk, whose very names call up many a pleasant old-world tale; for they were both stately Roman and British towns, and Caerleon had its archbishop long before Augustine came to Canterbury. Nothing is left now of its splendid palaces, with gilded roofs which glittered in the sun, its baths and temples, its wonderful stoves; but, to this day, many of the houses in the village are partly built with Roman bricks, and Roman pillars hold up the market-place.

It may be that the old castle, whose ruins still overhang Usk, was one of the homes of the hero-

king, Arthur ; and, perhaps, Merlin, the mighty magician, helped to make the city beautiful after the Romans had left it. It is of King Arthur and the noble knights and lovely ladies of his court we think most, as riding in gay cavalcade through the streets of Caerleon and Usk.

The coast of Monmouth, along the Bristol Channel and Severn mouth, is flat, low, and marshy, like the eastern coasts, and the sea is kept out by embankments and sea-walls. Between Wye and Usk, it is called 'Caldicot Level,' and 'Wentloog Level,' to the west of Usk.

The Black Mountains come down out of Hereford into a narrow strip, on the north-west of Monmouth,—three ranges with wild glens between them.

STAFFORDSHIRE.

I.

STAFFORDSHIRE is perhaps the central county of England—a busy county, with more people for its size than any other, except Lancashire, and the counties which divide London between them. It is so busy a county because it has two large coal-fields, one in the south, twenty miles long by ten broad, and a smaller one in the north. Upon each of these coal-fields a great manufacture is carried on, which gives work to many people.

Staffordshire is a flat county on the whole; there are some hills in the south, near Dudley, made of mountain limestone, against which a bed of coal, thirty feet deep, abuts. These limestone hills are full of interest to the geologist, who knows that all limestone rocks were made by living creatures, and lay at one time at the ocean bottom. This limestone rock, once a soft mud sea-bottom, afterwards heaved up, and torn apart, and washed away in places, not all at once, but in the course of long ages, was not only altogether made by small creatures, but is full of the

remains of the shell-fish which lived in the sea millions of years ago. These shell-fish were at first covered up in the soft slime, and after long ages we come upon them in the rock into which this slime has hardened.

Quantities of these little stone fishes, showing their shape and every little mark on their shells quite perfectly, may be found in the Wren's Nest, a curious limestone cavern near Dudley. All the middle of Staffordshire is within the Trent Valley.

The north-east corner is filled with moorlands, a continuation of the moors in the West Riding. These moors are cold and wet, bleak and high ; nothing will grow upon them but patches of oats, the most hardy of grains, and that only in the most fertile parts in the south. In the north they stretch out, wild, hilly wastes, with heaps of gravel and piles of crag, bogs, and marshes. The highest of the moorland hills are about 1000 feet, and the ridges are divided by deep valleys, or glens, through some of which flow the waters of the streams which join the Trent.

Dovedale, the Valley of the Dove, is very beautiful. The Trent itself, the great river of the central plains of England, brings its waters from these moors, where it rises in three springs.

The north-west of Staffordshire, where the coal-field is, is a level tract.

II.—THE BLACK COUNTRY.

The great South Staffordshire coal-field, upon which more than 400 collieries are worked, stretches from the high ground of Channock Chase, south of the town of Stafford, to the borders of Worcestershire. This district is the 'Black Country,' not because coal is black, and colliers are black, but a great manufacture is carried on here, the smoke, caused by which, blackens the buildings and the very air.

The stranger who passes through the Black Country by the London and North-Western Railway on a winter's night, sees a curious and rather awful sight.

Dotted everywhere about are, apparently, many small volcanoes, from fifty to seventy feet high, with sheets of flame breaking out from the top of each. Below, are what look in the dark like black caverns, lighted by a lurid glare, within which black figures are flitting about. Surely they cannot be men, for they are carrying about huge sheets of red-hot fire, or rolling about great balls of fire, or dabbling with long poles in fiery streams! Are they demons? No hand of flesh could thus dare the touch of the Fire King. But the din of clanging hammers reassures the stranger; by that he knows he must be in the midst of some great metal-works.

All these flaming furnaces and forges are employed in the working of our English precious metal,—not gold, nor silver, but the far more useful iron, which

lies in seams among the very coal necessary to work it, as if, indeed, fuel and metal, or rather ore, had been placed together in God's providence, that, working together, they might help to make England a great nation.

For what should we do without iron? We travel upon iron ways, drawn by iron horses; we pass over iron bridges; sleep upon iron bedsteads; have iron steamboats and iron war-ships; break up the ground with iron ploughs, drawn, too, by iron horses; we have iron grates, and iron gates, and iron tools; iron churches and iron schoolrooms; nay, iron houses, which we send across sea to distant lands.

If the gnomes were to rise and carry all the gold in the world into the bowels of the earth once more we should hardly miss it out of our daily life; but where should we be without iron? No more machines to make stuffs for our clothes, nor needles to sew them; no more tools with which to build our houses, not as much as a spade left to dig the ground ready for the corn-seeds to produce our bread. We should be savages at once, reduced to the berries in the woods and such other food as we could kill with bow and arrow.

Why is iron thus useful above all metals? Because, though it is as a giant for hardness and strength, it is obedient as a child to the will of man. It can be turned into a fluid, it will take any shape the workman pleases; it can be made into strong bars or drawn into the finest wire; it can be spread out into plates or sheets; it can be twisted and bent

in all directions; it can be made sharp or blunt, soft or hard.

This precious metal is found, combined with various earthy substances, chiefly clay, in a stony dark-coloured ore, called *ironstone*. The ore occurs in beds of varying thickness, from a few inches to several feet. These beds, or layers, generally slope towards the horizon, so that in some places they crop out at the surface, while at other parts the bed is hundreds of feet below the surface. There are generally a great many beds or seams one beneath another, separated by beds of other mineral. Here, in the Black Country, these other minerals are often coal and lime, the very things which are wanted to melt the ore.

The mines are worked very much as other mines are. Long underground galleries are dug, sometimes so narrow that a man has to lie flat to his work. The ore is blasted with gunpowder, and the men get it out with a pick-axe.

The next question is, how to extract the metal from the ore.

In the first place, it is *roasted*. Those great roundish heaps, like the nests of some strange creature, which are to be seen smoking away by thousands in the iron country, are made of layers of coal and ironstone, then coal, then ironstone, and a thatch of fine coal, or slack, at the top, over all. A fire is kindled at one end, and it works its way slowly to every part of the mass, roasting the ore as it goes. We know how the gas in a coal-fire bubbles and blazes, and at last passes off in smoke.

The ironstone is roasted to get rid of all the waste matter which the heat of the fire will cause to pass off as gas.

Now the ore is ready for the blast-furnace, into which it is thrown to be *smelted*. These furnaces are the ever-flaming volcanoes, more than 160 of them in all, of the Black Country. They are huge and clumsy buildings, something like a rounded pyramid, built so as to possess great strength and great power of resisting heat. They are always full of fiercely-burning material, which is thrown in at the top as fast as it is drawn out at the bottom; the top is generally open, and for miles around a great body of flame may be seen shooting up, night and day, Sunday and week-day. For these are fires which must never go out, and though work is not often done on Sundays, there must always be somebody to feed the furnace. The iron-master could not afford to let out a fire which it would cost him 1000*l.* to have lighted again.

At the bottom of the blast-furnace there is a deep, square hearth, and all the hollow of the furnace above this hearth is filled with ore and coal. But if only ore and coal burned in the furnace, we should never get iron out. It is a curious fact that certain substances have an affection, or what chemists call an affinity, for each other.

The ore, as it is cast into the furnace, contains much clay along with the iron. The thing is, to separate the iron from the clay: the separation is brought about by throwing in another substance along with the coal and the ore, for which the clay has such an

affinity, that it will leave the iron and join itself to this new substance, so leaving the iron pure.

Lime is this useful substance, and one reason why the iron of South Staffordshire is so valuable, is that lime, as well as coal, is found quite close to the ore —often in the same seams.

When once it is filled, the furnace is kept roaring and blazing away—fresh coal, and ore, and lime being poured in at the top three or four times every hour, day and night. The metal, when it is melted, being heavier than the rest, sinks to the square hearth at the bottom of the furnace.

But how is this fierce fire kept up continually? You know that when a fire gets low we make it burn up by sending a blast of air or wind upon it with the bellows. Perhaps you do not know that such a blast of air, on its way up the chimney, is always blowing upon the fire to make it burn. A tremendous blast of air is necessary to keep these great blast-furnaces burning bright; so a steam-engine feeds the huge bellows which blow the air in; and, in order that it may not come as a cold wind upon the hot iron, this air passes through red-hot pipes, so that it is three times as hot as boiling water when it enters the furnace.

When the melted iron has been falling into the square trough at the bottom of the furnace for twelve hours, it is tapped, or allowed to flow out.

In front of the furnace is a flat space covered with sand. One long channel, or hollow in the sand, called the *sow*, is made down the middle of this space; from

each side of the sow, a hundred or more smaller channels, called *pigs*, branch out.

All being ready, the clay-stopper to the hole at the bottom of the furnace is broken away, and the white-hot liquid metal pours forth in a stream, bubbling and hissing, taking all manner of beautiful colours, and filling the air with a cloud of fiery sparks.

Men stand about with long poles, to turn the stream of liquid metal into one and another of the pig-moulds, until they and the sow are all filled; and fiery-bright and very beautiful the whole appearance is. The pigs soon grow solid, and are carried away from the moulds while they are yet hot.

III.—THE FOUNDRY.

This is *pig-iron*, which, to make fire-grates, and railings, and knobs, and a thousand other things, is just once more melted in a furnace; and then the liquid metal is poured into a mould, a hollow clay shape of the exact pattern of the article that is to be made. This is called *casting*, and all goods which do not require either great strength or great beauty are made of *cast iron*. Look at an iron fender or fire-grate, and you will generally find that the edges of the patterns are round and dull, not fine and sharp; a proof that the article has been cast in a mould, and not *wrought* with hand and hammer.

But if the iron is to be brought to the forge to be made very close and strong, or to be wrought into delicate patterns, it has much to go through

yet; for pig-iron is brittle, and will not bear the hammer.

The 'pigs' are once more cast into a furnace, called a *finery*, out of which the melted metal, much purer than when it went in, flows into a flat mould, where it is instantly chilled with cold water. Then these long slabs of refined iron are broken in pieces, and put into the *puddling* furnaces, where the brittle iron becomes malleable, that is, able to bear the hammer; and ductile, that is, capable of being drawn out into thin wire if need be. The puddling-furnace is one in which the flame and heat are cast down, or reverberated, from an arched roof.

The 'puddler' is a kind of salamander, able to bear any heat. Naked to the waist, he watches the iron as it begins to melt through a hole in the furnace, stirring the pieces about with a long bar of iron, which he is obliged to change for a cold one every few minutes, or even the bar would melt. When the whole is melted, the puddler keeps the mass constantly stirred, and, under the stirring, the fluid becomes thickened, and gradually separates into lumps; these, with two iron rods, he works into one big ball or *bloom*, as it is called. Then the fiery ball of iron is lifted out of the furnace, and passes from one workman to another with great rapidity, giving a vivid and very bustling appearance to the forge-house.

The bloom is flattened under an enormous hammer, and then pressed out further under great rollers, until it is brought to the shape and size required. This rolling is very hard work, as the sheets of iron must

be made red-hot between each rolling; and the men may be seen, bathed in perspiration, carrying a sheet of red-hot iron, two or three yards square, to and from the furnace.

If the iron sheet or bar is not just the right size after the rolling, the edges are clipped with a pair of monster shears; and it is a curious sight to see iron cut through as if it were no more than pretty stiff paper.

The iron is now ready for the forge, where the smith shapes and hammers it upon his anvil into whatever kind of *wrought-iron* goods it is his business to produce.

In the towns of the Black Country, Wolverhampton, Walsall, Bilston, Wednesbury, West Bromwich, different kinds of *hardware*—the name given to iron goods—are produced; nails, bedsteads, locks, bolts, keys, screws; in fact, all kinds of iron articles, as well as much japanned ware, that is, iron goods coated with a peculiar kind of varnish, such as we see on some tea-trays.

IV.—TRENT VALLEY.

The first fifty miles of Trent are in Stafford. It rises in the north-east moorlands, flows right across the county, and leaves it to enter Derby close by Burton. Burton is a great brewing place; a rather dull town, with many rows of brick houses just alike, where more than four thousand men are employed in the breweries. It is only at Burton that the Trent becomes wide and deep enough to carry boats of any

size; but it is a useful river to Staffordshire in another way, as the beautiful green meadows all along its banks show. Both the Trent and the little rivers which join it, the Blythe, the Tame, the Sow, and others, overflow their banks after rainy weather, and when the rivers get back into their beds again, they leave river-mud behind, which is good for the grass.

There is usually a good deal of rain here, which makes the harvest rather late in the numerous farms in the middle of the county, where wheat, and potatoes, and turnips are grown. The moorlands to the north are too cold for wheat, so moorland oats are the chief crop. Most of the Staffordshire people, however, are employed in the great manufactures.

In Saxon days, Staffordshire, like the rest of middle England, belonged to the kingdom of Mercia. King Alfred should, by right, have been king of all England, Mercia, as well as the rest; but the Danes were so fierce and powerful in his reign, that it was not until he had beaten them in the great battle of Edington, in Wilts, that he could call any of the country his own.

After that battle it was settled that the Danes were to have all the north of England, which was afterwards called Danelagh; but that Mercia, or middle England, and all the south should belong to Alfred.

As he could not see to everything himself, he gave Mercia to his daughter, Ethelfleda, and her husband, to look after, having first fought two battles with the Danes close by Wolverhampton.

King Alfred died, and Ethelfleda's husband died; the Danes came pouring down south, and there was no one to take care of the people of middle England but the 'Lady of Mercia' herself. She was brave and powerful, and meant to drive the Danes, not only out of the English land, but further north than they were before. She came to Tamworth, on the Tame; close by which, Watling Street, the Roman road from London to Chester, enters Stafford. This old road still goes through the county, but there are now two large paper-mills and other works in Tamworth which were not there in Ethelfleda's days. The town was in ruins, ravaged by the Danes, and its castle destroyed. So the Lady of Mercia had another strong castle built for its defence, and went on with her army up the Trent Valley.

She would pass Lichfield, a town in a valley, with not very high hills about it, an old town even then, (about 915), with a Saxon cathedral. The city is chiefly known now for its beautiful cathedral, one of the sights of which is a monument by the sculptor Chantrey; two little girls lying asleep in such a soft and natural way, that you forget they are made of cold marble, and want to give them a good-night kiss. Paper and carpets are made at Lichfield.

Then the Lady and her army would go on past Channock Chase, then a great forest, now an open heath, until she got to Stafford on the little river Sow, close by the Trent, and here she built another fort to keep back the Danes. Stafford, the county-town, is a rather large brick town now, where quantities of boots

and shoes are made. She may have gone on, past what is now the beautiful Trentham Park, as far as Newcastle-under-Lyme, another very old town, before she left middle England to keep the Welsh in order.

V.—THE POTTERIES.

One of the oldest and most interesting of all crafts is carried on upon the north Staffordshire coal-field. There the potter may still be seen at work, perhaps upon the very sort of potter's wheel mentioned in the Bible. The nations of old took great delight in the potter's beautiful art, and, fragile as are his wares, it is by these we best know ancient Egypt, and Greece, and Rome. Their buildings are in ruins, their weapons and ornaments are rust-eaten, but delicate vases, and urns, and earthen lamps, are now found in their tombs as beautiful in form and fresh in colour as when loving hands buried them with their dead, perhaps two thousand years ago.

The district called the Potteries lies a little east of Newcastle-under-Lyme, and is about ten miles long and two or three broad. It is really one long street, for all the towns and villages are so near each other that they either touch, or are joined together by rows of houses. There are many towns and villages along this highroad. Beginning at the north, the most important we pass through are Tunstall, Burslem, Hanley, Shelton, Etruria, Stoke, Fenton, and Lane End. Along either side of the road, passing through these towns, is such a string of potteries and porcelain

works, that the wonder is, what can become of all the things made here.

The Grand Trunk Canal goes through the potteries, with its many barges, bringing flint or clays from the south coast, or carrying away dishes, and jugs, and plates, to one of the two great ports which the canal connects, Liverpool or Hull.

There are many streets of small houses in the towns, where nearly everybody lives by making pottery. The street-door, always open in fine weather, opens into the front parlour, and the first thing to be seen in every house is a handsome chest of drawers, which stands opposite the front door, with all the ornaments or books of the family on the top.

The manufactories are known by large, high, dark-coloured buildings, something like a sugar-loaf in shape. These are the ovens in which the ware is baked, or, rather, they are the 'hovels' which surround the ovens, and within which the men stand to attend to their bakings. Each manufactory is called a 'bank,' and each 'bank,' which employs perhaps a thousand persons, has its buildings divided into squares, as the 'saucer square,' the 'dish-maker's square,' the 'plate square,' &c., where the makers of these particular articles work.

Flint and clay are the materials used by the potter, and though the clay of the district was used at one time to make a red ware, Staffordshire yields nothing now but coal to bake and water to bear away the ware. The blue clay of Purbeck and other parts of Dorset, black and brown clays brought from the

south of Devon (which lose their colours, and become white in the oven), and the white china clay of Cornwall, are the clays most prized. Flint is always found in the chalk districts, and the roundish flint stones are brought from the south in boat-loads, chiefly from Gravesend.

These materials are prepared for the potter with great care. First, the clays are mixed with pure water to the thickness of cream. Then the flint-stones, so hard that the hoofs of the horses strike sparks of fire from them, must also be made into a sort of cream, of a beautiful whiteness, though the stones themselves are nearly black inside.

How flints came to be used in the manufacture is one of the many curious stories connected with the potter's trade.

While on a journey to London on horseback, a potter named Astbury was obliged to seek a remedy for the eyes of his horse, which seemed to be rapidly going blind. The ostler of an inn near Dunstable burned a flint-stone till quite white, ground it to powder, and then blew a little of the dust into the eyes of the horse, by which they were made to discharge freely. Astbury noticed the white colour of the burnt flint, the ease with which it was then reduced to powder, and that it made a sort of clay when discharged in the moisture from the horse's eyes. He had been looking out for some substance which should make his dark-coloured ware white. So, on his return home, he mixed powdered flints with his clay, and with such success that they have been used ever since

in the manufacture. They are first burnt in a kiln for about thirty hours; then they are crushed with heavy stampers, and then the bits are put into a flint-pan, where four great arms, like the sails of a wind-mill, roll them about against each other and against the hard floor of the pan, until the flints are reduced to a fine powder, which, with the water in the pan, makes a kind of thick cream.

These different creams then flow into a large tank, where they are mixed together. The mixture is drained through very fine silk sieves, so that it shall be perfectly smooth. It is then 'slip,' and is carried to the slip-kiln, a long, open trough, with great fires underneath, where the water evaporates until the cream becomes a rather stiff clay.

The clay is not yet quite ready for the potter; it must be kneaded, pretty much as dough is kneaded for bread, only that now this kneading is done by the twirling round of a machine with many knives sticking out all round it, which cuts and presses in all directions, and makes more even dough than can be made by hand. A similar machine is used to knead the dough for sea-biscuits.

VI.—BISCUIT-MAKING AND PRINTING.

Potter's 'Biscuit' is the dough after it has been made into vessels and baked.

When the dough has been kneaded it is cut into wedges, and these are allowed to lie for some months. Indeed, in China, they think the porcelain is the better

if the wedges lie for many years, so that a father often makes enough clay to last his son all his lifetime.

When the clay is to be used, the *slapper* does his work. He takes a wedge, and dashes it upon a bench with all his might, then cuts it through with a wire, and slaps one piece upon the other. This must be done forty or fifty times, until there are no air-bubbles left in the mass, and then it is ready for the *thrower*.

The thrower works with a potter's wheel—a little round table on a single leg, which is so set in the ground that it can turn round freely. Round the table-leg is a band, which also goes round a wheel at a little distance. This wheel is kept constantly turned by a woman or a boy, and as the wheel turns, the band causes the little table to twist round with it.

The potter sits on a stool behind his little whirling table. A boy at hand gives him a ball of dough, large enough to make cup, or jug, or basin, or some other vessel of a round shape. It is truly an astonishing thing to see the potter at work on his clay. He seems as if he could do anything, everything with it. At one moment his clay is a shapeless heap, then a round cake, then a ball, then a pillar, then a jug, then a basin; a sudden turn converts it into a bottle, or a plate, or a saucer. His hands work so quickly that the wonder is where the clay comes from, how it changes its shape, where it goes to, as one vessel is exchanged for another. With his hands wetted, he presses the clay on the whirling table, raises it into a sort of pillar, flattens it into a lump, squeezes it into various shapes, until he has squeezed out every

air-bubble, for one such bubble would spoil his work.

Then, pressing his two thumbs on the top of the mass, he hollows it, and, with the thumbs inside and fingers outside, he so draws, and presses, and moulds the clay as to make it convex outside and concave inside, and of any form he may desire. The whirling of the table causes the clay to whirl round under his hands, and so to take a round shape. Vessels which are not quite circular are made in other ways.

The baller hands the potter another ball of clay, cleverly lifts the cup or basin on to a board, and when the board is full, carries the vessels into a warm room to dry. When the vessels are pretty dry they are carried to the turner, who causes them to fly round under his lathe, so that the chisel may shave off every bit of unevenness. But cups must have handles, and the clay for these is pressed into a hollow mould of the right thickness, and then bent by hand into the right shape, and fastened to the cup or jug by means of 'slip;' such a secure fastening, that once handle and jug have been baked together, the handle will never come off.

Dishes and other things which are not quite round are made by pressing the clay into a hollow mould of the exact shape required, then mould and clay dish are baked together.

The baking lasts for about forty hours, the vessels being carefully packed, so that they do not touch one another, in strong cases; and the large, sugar-loaf-shaped kilns are filled with these cases.

When the ware is taken out of the cases, it is what is called 'biscuit,' and is carried carefully in baskets to the biscuit-room, where there are often enormous quantities of such ware. There is no pattern on the biscuit, and it is quite dull-looking.

The pattern is drawn by a designer—leaves, or flowers, or pretty pictures—the engraver copies the pattern in deep lines on a copper plate. These deep lines are filled with ink of the proper colour, green, or blue, or red: a sheet of thin yellow paper is pressed upon the copper plate, and takes the pattern of the lines in the moist ink; then the paper is laid, inky side down, upon a dish or saucer, and a woman rubs the paper with a roll of flannel until the wet ink has gone into the dish and made the pattern on it. The 'biscuit' ware is baked again to fix the pattern, and then the vessels are plunged into a tub of *glaze*, and come out with a new coat; they are covered with a substance, bright and smooth, like glass; and, after one more baking, they are ready for use, cups and saucers, jugs and plates, smooth and shining, and gay with a pretty pattern, such as we have upon our tables.

The greatest of our English potters was Josiah Wedgwood, who lived in the reign of George III., and built the village of Etruria, or 'Trury,' as the people call it, for his work-people.

His father and his grandfather were Staffordshire potters, not very well off, so Josiah was set to work as a thrower when he was still a young boy, and had not much time for learning lessons. But he had a great

love for beautiful things, and thought that people might be made just a little bit happier if their jugs, and mugs, and cups were of a pleasing shape and made of a pretty ware, just as the sight of birds and flowers makes us happier.

As Josiah Wedgwood loved his work, he succeeded, and became a rich man, because no such pretty earthenware was made anywhere as in his 'bank.' Now, people are willing to give a large sum of money for a single plate of his making, as there are but few of his works left.

Among other things, he invented a beautiful cream-coloured table ware, called 'Queen's ware,' by command of the queen, to whom he sent some of it as a present. Jasper ware, of a very clear white, and a handsome black ware, were also made by him.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE.

I.

NOTTINGHAM is one of the very flat midland counties in the Trent Valley. The northern part of the county is a continuation of the plain of York. It is a good corn-growing country, with hop-gardens in some parts, as about East Retford and Kneesall.

Low as the county is generally, it sinks still lower by the rivers; and only by good draining are the river-side lands saved from being waste marshes. The farmers, however, manage to get capital grass crops, even in the most marshy spots, upon which many cattle feed. Excellent cheese is made in the county.

The Car, quite in the north, between the Trent and its tributary, the Idle, is one of these marshy tracts; so is the country about Newark, where the Trent bends north, and is joined by the Devon, a very low, flat spot, where the rivers often overflow and flood the fields for miles around.

The south of Nottingham is a little higher, and has some moors; but they are flat, never rising into real hills.

The only part that can be called hilly is the west —the prettiest part of the county in every way. Through West Nottingham and Yorkshire, as far north as Whitby, the great forest of Sherwood once stretched, with its grassy glades, and mighty oaks, and merrie men, clad in forest-green. Here Robin Hood and his hundred merrie men—famous archers every one—did what they held for rough justice, robbed the rich to help the poor. Those were lawless days. The king—the brave Cœur de Lion—was in Palestine, fighting in the Holy Wars; and his brother John, who cared for nothing but his own pleasure, ruled England in his stead. So the poor were oppressed; and bad, rich men had things all their own way.

Robin Hood, who, it was said, was a nobleman born, but who loved the free forest life better than lands or name, did what he could to right these wrongs. He and Friar Tuck, Little John and Maid Marian, and all his foresters free, however, lived royally on the King's deer, and helped themselves to all they wanted out of other people's purses. So we cannot think they went to work in the best way, or that they chose this way of life altogether for the sake of helping the oppressed.

Sir Walter Scott tells some delightful tales in *Ivanhoe* about this brave outlaw. How he went to a tournament, given by Prince John, and shot for a prize; and his arrow went into a mark so small and distant, that the people thought he was aided by witchcraft; how he met a black knight riding alone in the forest—a knight large, and brave, and strong;

how they attacked a robber-castle together, and the knight was mightier in battle than the outlaw; how the knight turns out to be King Richard returned from the wars; and how King and outlaw band feast together on the King's own deer under the oaks of the forest; and the King is gracious, and the outlaw courteous; and they part, loving and trusting one another.

Poor Robin Hood! He was betrayed at last, when he was an old man. He was ill, and went to a Yorkshire nunnery to ask the Abbess to bleed him; for in those days to let blood was supposed to be a cure for most illnesses. But the treacherous Abbess allowed him to bleed to death, to the great grief of his friends, to whom he had always been true and loving.

Most of the forest has disappeared, though there are fine woods scattered here and there; and Robin Hood's memory is still preserved in 'Robin Hood's Hills,' 'Robin Hood's Pot,' 'Robin Hood's Oak,' &c.

There is many a fine old oak here still, which might have sheltered Robin and his men—especially near Worksop. No less than five dukes have parks near this town; and there are many gentlemen's seats, with fine trees, in West Nottingham, so that it has still wood enough to remind us of the ancient forest.

The great coal-field, which reaches from Leeds to Nottingham, occupies part of the west of the county. Greasley is the centre of a mining and iron district; and there are iron-works at Mansfield and some other towns.

II.—STOCKINGS AND LACE.

The making of stockings and of lace are important employments in the three midland counties—Leicestershire, Derbyshire, and Nottinghamshire. The town of Nottingham is the centre of the trade ; and all the towns and villages in the south of the county are more or less employed in it,—Radford, Basford, Stapleford, Arnold, Bulwell, and as far north as Mansfield.

Stocking-making is a poor trade : fathers, mothers, and children work—the older people for fourteen or fifteen hours a-day ; homes are neglected ; people have no time to keep themselves tidy ; and, with all this hard work, a family can barely earn enough to live upon. There are silk stockings made in Nottingham, as in Derby, and the makers of these are somewhat better off.

The stockinger can do his work in his own home just as well as in a factory, where many frames are engaged. He works at a stocking-frame, making his whole stocking of a single thread, just as a hand-knitter does ; but, instead of working with four needles he uses many—as many as fifty needles to an inch if the stocking is very fine. How the machine keeps all these needles at work is too difficult a matter to explain. The stocking-frame was invented in Queen Elizabeth's days by William Lee, of Woodborough, in Nottinghamshire, who was obliged to live on his wife's earnings as a stocking-knitter, and invented this machine that she might knit the faster.

He carried his frame to London, and prospered there. The Queen came to see him; his trade increased, and other workmen learnt how to make and use his frame. In time, there was a rich and powerful Framework Knitters' Company in London: a company which gave fine dinners, and had a gilded boat upon the Thames, with twenty rowers, all in splendid liveries. There were branches of the trade, at this time, in Nottingham, Derby, and Leicester.

These were the good days of the stocking-trade. But the stockingers took more apprentices than they wanted: and, by-and-by, there came to be more people to make stockings than could be properly paid for their work. It is a trade easy to learn; children and women can work the frames as well as men; and there are so many ready to do the work that, perhaps, there is no trade at which people have to labour for such long hours and for so little money.

The poor pay he got for his stocking-work put it into the head of a rather idle workman, named Hammond, that he might manage to invent a way of making lace on his stocking-frame. Up to this time every tiny hole or *mesh* in lace or net was made by hand-work—the work of women, who might be seen with pillow and bobbins at their cottage-doors.

Hammond examined the pillow-lace on his wife's cap, and at last did invent a frame, which succeeded so well, that the stocking-weavers were able to make far cheaper lace than the pillow-lace makers.

In the beginning of this century a Mr. Heathcote invented a bobbin-net machine, which made, at a

quick rate, and for little money, net with a beautiful even mesh, as perfect as any hand-worked lace made in France.

The pillow-lace makers were full of wrath about this new invention, said it would deprive them of bread, and drove Mr. Heathcote and his machines out of the county.

But though Mr. Heathcote was gone, the pillow-lace makers failed to get back their trade. Everybody in Nottingham seemed to think of nothing but ways of making lace: clergymen, doctors, lawyers, servants, all classes of people, tormented themselves night and day to invent some new plan. Many lost their wits, and others committed suicide, because they could not invent machines. The earnings of the work-people were enormous. Men would leave their usual calling and take to a lace-frame, at which a man might easily earn thirty or even forty shillings a-day.

But prices soon fell, and the lace which Mr. Heathcote charged five guineas a yard for may now be bought for a shilling.

Still, the lace-makers of the Nottingham towns are better paid than the stocking-workers. The young women who embroider patterns on lace or veils seldom get more than a shilling a-day: but much of this work, also, is done by machinery. The thumping of the lace-machines may be heard in many houses in the back streets of Nottingham, though the centre of the town is not much filled with them.

III.—THE TWO KINGS.

'The princely Trent, the North's imperious flood,' appears to have a special regard for Nottinghamshire. It enters from Derbyshire at the south-west corner, flows, 'crowned with many a dainty wood,' past 'Nottingham's proud height, that brave, exalted seat,'—the old feudal castle—with 'large-spread meads upon the other side, all flourishing in flowers.' Still between 'large-spread meads' the river flows on to Newark, past another stately castle; and then, as if loth to leave this favoured county, it takes a sudden bend northwards, and enters Lincoln after its junction with the Idle, quite at the north of Nottingham.

River-vessels can make their way upon Trent all through Nottinghamshire, indeed, as far as Burton in Stafford; and, perhaps, it is to the Trent the county owed its importance in early days when there were no railways; it is certain that many interesting events have occurred at the two castles of Nottingham and Newark.

Not always pleasant events; for these two castles remind us of two kings who went to war with their own people. The first of these, John, was quite false, and selfish, and cruel. He imprisoned his subjects, deprived them of their property, took away their lives if they offended him; and all without heeding any law but his own selfish pleasure. The barons compelled him to sign the Great Charter, which he never

meant to observe. John hired foreign soldiers to fight against his barons, and they, in their despair, invited the son of the French king to come and rule in England. The French prince came, and England might have belonged to France ever since, but that, just at the right moment, a joyful thing for our country happened at Newark Castle.

The castle was held by the king's soldiers, and the barons besieged it. The king marched down from Lincoln in great haste to relieve his friends. The king and his army crossed the Wash at low water; the tide rose before they expected it, and the king's baggage and all the beautiful crown jewels were lost for ever. John was so vexed about this loss, that he fretted himself into a fever, and, while the fever was on him, he feasted greedily; the fever and his own gluttony killed him; he entered Newark Castle, but only in time to die. The French prince had no longer any chance; he returned to his own country, and England was saved from a great danger and disgrace.

The second king, Charles I., was a far better man than John; yet he plunged his country into a civil war of an even worse kind; for Englishmen fought against Englishmen; often brother against brother, and son against father.

On the evening of a very stormy and tempestuous day he raised the Royal Standard at Nottingham, as a signal that all his friends were to come and fight for him, 1642. The standard was nearly blown down by the strong wind, and but few joined the king at first;

but this was the beginning of a civil war which lasted four years, and in which many terrible battles were fought, up and down the country. Many brave men, like the old lord of Basing House; brave women, too, like the Lady Banks of Corfe Castle, gave up everything, and did deeds of noble daring for the king.

But all the efforts of his friends were vain; the county of Nottingham saw the close of the war as it had seen the commencement. The Scots' army had come into England to help the Parliament party; they were laying siege to Newark Castle, which was held by the king's friends. The king saw that things were going against him, thought the Scots would be kind, and gave himself into their hands. They left Newark, and marched off to Newcastle with their prize; but the Scots failed to make the king agree to their wishes in any way, so they gave him up again to the army of the Parliament. Two or three years were spent in trying to settle matters; and at last a grievous thing was done; the king was beheaded by his own people, 1649.

WARWICKSHIRE.

I.

THIS middle county of England is a very fair and pleasant shire. It has no high mountains nor broad rivers, nor grand scenery of any kind. But it has beautiful broad pastures, with spreading oaks here and there for shade, and handsome cows dotted about upon them. It has swelling uplands, and woods of oak and elm, especially in the middle, and north, and west of the shire. It has pleasant hills with glorious views, and stately mansions in green parks, with stories enough belonging to them to fill a thick book. Feudal castles, too, it has, the proudest left in the land.

And such meadows as there are, gay with flowers —white, purple, and gold—spreading wide on both banks of Avon, and by the smaller streams and canals, on each side of the road, from Edge Hill to Warwick, and here and there, all over the county,—meadows with clumps of noble trees. Indeed, half the county is in meadows and pastures, for Warwick is a great grazing county, and the farmers are very proud of their beasts.

The south is, for the most part, under the plough; not that but waving corn-fields, and green crops, and clover-fields, as well as fruit-orchards, are to be seen all over the shire.

Warwickshire is indeed a pleasant county. A story is told of two gentlemen in a company who contended that each knew the prettiest drive in England. So each gentleman was called on to name his favourite drive, and the rest of the company were to decide between them. From Coventry to Warwick, said one, and from Warwick to Coventry was the choice of the other; they were both thinking of the same delightful drive.

Perhaps half the charm of this drive lies in the stories belonging to the places on the way. There is the quaint old city of Coventry, with its queer corners and gables, and half-timbered houses with overhanging stories, and the spires of its three ancient and beautiful churches,—St. Michael's, the most beautiful of the three,—which may be seen miles off, for the city stands on a low hill in the middle of a valley. Coventry lost its city walls, with their gates, and many towers, two centuries ago; for, in the days of the Civil War, the citizens fought for the Parliament, so when Charles II. came to be king, he punished them by throwing down their walls. Their beautiful cathedral fell by order of Henry VIII., along with the great abbeys all over the land. The city still boasts of St. Mary's Hall, with its oddly-carved roof of oak, and its gallery for the minstrels; a stately hall, fit for the entertainment of kings and their courts. Coventry

had need of such a hall, for the king, and the royal family, and the great nobles used very often to visit the city in the summer, that they might see the famous Coventry processions and shows, and the play, called a Mystery, performed in the streets by the monks. The Mystery was a Bible story, most often the Crucifixion, or the Nativity, which was acted by the monks, one man being Joseph, another Herod, in his royal robes, and so on,—the mother, Mary, and the child, Christ, and the ass upon which they went into Egypt. We should not like to see these sacred stories turned into a play, but in the days when there were few books, the monks thought it a good way to teach the people.

The procession was very grand, with trumpets sounding, banners waving, bells ringing, boughs strewed in the streets, and tapestry hung out of the windows. All the trades marched in their order, fishers and cooks, bakers and millers, tailors and weavers, smiths and masons; there were all the men of Coventry; and the wives and children, in holiday dress, in the streets looking on. Truly it was a gay day; but times have changed, and though Coventry still has a show on the Friday of Trinity week, it is nothing like the procession of former days.

Coventry owed all its glory to the monks, who had a splendid abbey there, founded by the fair Lady Godiva and the great Earl Leofric, who was lord of Coventry.

A rather hard lord he was, and forced from his people a heavy tax, which they knew not how to pay,

KENILWORTH CASTLE. P. 175.

and they were weary of their lives for hard labour which made them none the better off. This matter grieved the Lady Godiva, and she prayed her lord to ease them. The more she besought him the sterner he grew, and at last he cried, if she would have these idle Coventry folk eased of their burdens, she must ride naked through their city at noon; a thing he knew his beautiful, delicate lady could never do. But Earl Leofric did not know what a pitiful heart may dare. The lady gave orders that every soul should shut him up in his house, that all doors and windows should be closed and screened; and, letting down her thick, flaxen hair, which fell nearly to her ankles, she mounted her palfrey, and rode, naked, through the streets of the silent city. The story goes that one curious tailor, Peeping Tom, must needs pop out his head, and that he was struck blind for his pains. Thus was Coventry made toll-free.

For nearly a century and a half Coventry has been famous for the manufacture of ribbons and watches, but of late years there has been much distress among the ribbon-makers, because foreign ribbons are now just as cheap, and are in some ways prettier and better than those of English make, so the trade of the town has fallen off.

II.—KENILWORTH CASTLE.

Midway between Coventry and Warwick is the old-fashioned town of Kenilworth, with its single street, stretching for a mile along the road. Combs

are made there now and silk is woven. Not for these things, but for the ruins of its splendid old castle, to which a second street leads, is Kenilworth famous.

These grand ruins, overgrown with ivy, stand upon a rocky height, from which there is a wide view. The great hall, ninety feet long and half as wide, is still to be seen, as are some of the towers, but the soldiers of Cromwell did much to make the noble castle a pile of ruins.

Kenilworth was long a royal castle, and many stories are attached to it. Its gayest days were when Queen Elizabeth came here on a visit to her favourite, Dudley, Earl of Leicester, to whom she had given the castle and its lands. She came, attended by thirty-one barons, besides the ladies of the court, who, with four hundred servants, were all lodged in the fortress. For seventeen days the festival lasted, and ten oxen were slaughtered every morning, with sheep, and birds, and fish, and whatever dainty meat earth, air, and water could supply. The very servants who waited upon the court were clothed in velvet.

Show after show was prepared to amuse the queen on her way. When she entered the gates, six trumpeters, clad in long garments of silk, who stood upon the wall of the gate, with their silvery trumpets of five feet long, sounded a tune of welcome. Within the inner gate she saw a floating island on a large pool, whereon was a beautiful lady, the Lady of the Lake, with many ladies to wait upon her, clad in rich silks, and all of them surrounded by blazing torches; and the Lady of the Lake greeted the queen with

QUEEN ELIZABETH AT KENILWORTH. *P.* 176.

verses bidding her welcome. This show was ended with a burst of music, and another followed, and another, for the queen loved shows dearly. At last she passed to the inner court, and was there set down from her palfrey, and conveyed up to a chamber, when did follow a great peal of guns and lightning by fireworks.

So it went on, ample feasting all the while, and every day some new pleasure, some new show to divert the queen and her court; there were rope-dancers and morris-dancers, with Friar Tuck and Maid Marian; there was hunting the deer in the park, and there was dancing in the great hall; there were fireworks, and tilts, and tournaments; there was beauty and courage, learning and wit, and everything went merrily, as in a fairy tale. Perhaps such high festival has never been held in England before or since, and all about it may be read in Sir Walter Scott's delightful story, called *Kenilworth.*

III.—GUY OF WARWICK.

The town of Warwick stands in a delightful spot upon the banks of Avon, in the middle of the shire of which it is the capital. It is a neat, modern-looking town, busy about the manufacture of hats and some other things; its chief business, however, is connected with the corn-trade, for Warwick is a market-town.

But nobody looks at the town; for, close by, on a rocky height overhanging the river, rise the round and lofty turrets of Warwick Castle; still the splendid

home of a great noble, and, perhaps, the finest left of the castles raised by the princely barons of other days.

A few years since, England nearly lost this noble monument of the past through a great fire, traceable to the carelessness of a plumber engaged in repairing the roof. It was felt that this would have been so truly a national loss, that a public subscription was set on foot for the restoration of the castle, which, happily, was not too much injured to be restored.

Some of the towers are very old. Domesday Book speaks of the castle as 'a special stronghold for the midland part of the kingdom.' And splendid, and full of curious treasures as the modern buildings are, it is to these old towers we turn with most interest. There is Guy's House, with walls ten feet thick, and Cæsar's Tower, oldest of all, where are shown the sword, shield, and helmet of Earl Guy.

Who was Guy of Warwick? Nobody knows,—nobody can be sure there ever was an Earl Guy; but everybody has heard that when the Danes had overrun the land, the king and people were in great straits because the Danes said, unless a man could be found to fight their champion, Colbrand, the Danish Anlaf should wear the English crown.

Now Colbrand was a giant, and no man dared stand before him, and king and people were sorely perplexed. Then the king was told in a dream to seek a palmer who had just landed at Portsmouth on his way back from the Holy Land. The king did as he was told,—the palmer became his champion, and

was of such mighty strength, that he slew the giant Colbrand at a single stroke. Then he revealed to the king that he was Guy, Earl of Warwick, but bade him keep the secret, while he went on his way to his castle on Avon-bank. Not to dwell there, however. To this day, a little way from the castle, is to be seen Guy's Cliff, a lovely spot, washed by Avon, and with trees overhanging its rocky sides. Hither came the mighty earl, and on this cliff he built a rude cell, and dwelt there, a hermit, until his death.

Another famous Earl of Warwick was the King Maker, the 'Last of the Barons,' who fought in the Wars of the Roses, and placed Edward of York on the throne; and then, because the king offended him, fought hard to restore the House of Lancaster. Marvellous things are told of the number of retainers who ate at his table, and the number of armed men who followed him to the field. But all about him, and his two fair daughters, and the wars he fought in, may be read in Lord Lytton's story, *The Last of the Barons.*

Leamington, a fashionable place, with mineral springs, is near Warwick, where the Leam joins the Avon.

IV.—THE 'SWAN OF AVON.'

A few miles lower down the river, is the town which makes Avon famous,—Stratford—

> 'Where his first infant lays sweet Shakespeare sung,
> Where the last accents faltered on his tongue.'

'The country about Stratford is not romantic, but extremely pleasant. The town stands in a fine, open valley. The Avon, a considerable stream, winds past it through pleasing meadows. The country is well cultivated, and about are wooded uplands and more distant ranges of hills. The town itself is a good, quiet, country-town. In Shakespeare's time it could be nothing more than a considerable village.'

Stratford appears now to live on the fame of Shakespeare. Wherever you turn you see,—the Shakespeare Hotel, or the Shakespeare Theatre, or the statue of Shakespeare, in its niche in the front of the Town Hall. A large sign informs you that, 'In this house the Immortal Bard was born;' and you go in and find the walls written all over, from floor to ceiling, and even upon the ceiling, with the names of the thousands who have come to Stratford to honour the memory of our great poet.

The church stands pleasantly between Stratford and the Avon; it is surrounded by trees, and there is an avenue of trees leading up to the porch. Before the Communion-rails is a row of flags, which, we read, cover the remains of the poet, his wife, Ann Hathaway, and his daughter Susanna. In a niche, close by, is the bust from which most of the portraits of Shakespeare we see have been taken. The head is noble, and the face, wise, kind, and grave; but we are a little disappointed, for we expect some sign of the mirth and fun of which his plays are full: the bust may not be a very true likeness.

Across some pleasant meadows, lies the village of

STRATFORD-ON-AVON CHURCH. *P.* 180.

Shottery, and there is Ann Hathaway's cottage,—her home before she was married, and during the years her young husband was in London, making himself famous: not that he cared much about fame, for he came back to Stratford and built himself a house, which he called 'New Place,' and lived many quiet years in the town where he was born, and where he was content to die.

There are but few stories of Shakespeare, either of his youth or manhood; but of what there is to tell or to show, Stratford is very proud. Well may Stratford-upon-Avon, and England, too, be proud to have given birth to the sweetest, wisest-hearted poet that the world has ever seen.

Avon, which is in Warwick a gentle stream, flowing between wooded, beautiful banks, leaves this shire a little beyond Stratford, and flows through the lovely Vale of Evesham: it takes its rise upon the battle-field of Naseby. For Shakespeare's sake, this Avon is held dear and famous among all British rivers.

V.—THE BATTLE OF EDGE HILL.*

'As I had walked from Stratford, Edge Hill had gradually risen, as it were before me, till it filled with its lofty *edge* the whole of the horizon on that side. A tower, near a mill, was pointed out to me by the country-people as standing just above the scene of the battle. So great is the elevation, that it gives

* Wm. Howitt.

you one of the most extensive prospects in the kingdom. The district towards Stratford, Warwick, and Coventry, and across into Gloucestershire and Worcestershire, lies in a grand expanse before you. You seem to take in, on a clear day, the breadth of a kingdom almost. Edge Hill is truly an edge,—that is, it is a step, where the country takes an abrupt rise, and when you gain the summit you find yourselves, not so much on a hill, as on the level of a higher country.

'Below, at the distance of three miles, lay the little town of Kineton; and mid-way between it and Radway, just below, is the spot where the battle took place. At that time, nearly the whole country round was open; now, it is cultivated like a garden, and the hill-side, down which the cavalry of the king rushed, is now covered with fine woods.'

The king's army marched hither from Shrewsbury; the army of the Parliament, under Essex, from Worcester. The day was far spent before the two armies met; the fight was fierce, and it was not plain on which side the victory lay. All night the two armies lay under arms, and next morning found themselves in sight of each other. General, as well as soldier, on both sides, seemed averse to renew the battle. Thus ended the fight of Edge Hill, the first pitched battle of the Civil War. Five thousand men are said to have been found dead on the field of battle. These were buried in two spots, yet to be seen,—one of them being planted with fir-trees. The copse of fir-trees is said to have been a pit at the time of

the battle, into which five hundred bodies were thrown.

This is the prayer and charge of Sir Jacob Astley, one of the king's generals, before the battle began :— 'O Lord! Thou knowest how busy I must be this day. If I forget Thee, do not Thou forget me.— March on, boys!'

Rugby, in the east of the shire, is famous for its Grammar School, one of the great public schools of England, which owes its fame to the late wise head-master, Dr. Arnold. He taught his boys there was something for each of them to care for beyond his own share of work and play,—the good of the school. For the good name of Rugby, every boy must do his best, both in lessons and games, must set his face against mean, underhand ways, must help the young ones to keep straight and do their work.

Rugby boys grew to be proud of their school,—to see that any wrong-doing was a disgrace to them all ; any well-doing, a credit : and more,—they learned from Dr. Arnold that, in being thus faithful to their school, they were doing what school-boys could to serve the Highest Master.

VI.—THE TOY-SHOP OF THE WORLD.

The north of Warwickshire is a manufacturing district ; a coal-field stretches from near Coventry to Tamworth, which employs many people, chiefly at

Bedworth. Nuneaton is a busy town among the collieries, where ribbons, silk, tools, and other things are made.

The great manufacturing town of Warwickshire —one of the greatest in England—is Birmingham, close by the Staffordshire iron and coal mines. It stands on rather high ground, and is considered a healthy town; it has some wide streets and good buildings, and some famous colleges and schools. But it is not these things that make a holiday in Birmingham a great treat; the owners of many of the factories are good enough to let visitors go over them, and we may see pens and pins, toys and brooches, turned out of hand in a wonderful way; for in Birmingham nearly everything is made by steam-power. It would be hard to name the thing which is *not* made here. Look round your room, and you will probably see twenty things which have been produced in this busy town—the bolt on the door, the screws which fix it, the gas-fittings, the castors on sofa or chair, the coal-box, perhaps the fender; the tea-tray, teapot, teaspoons; the pen you write with, the inkstand you use, the buttons on coat or dress, the toys and dolls the little ones have left about, vases and glasses; the ornaments your mother may be wearing; for Birmingham is famous for its jewellery. Here are made costly and beautiful objects in wrought gold and precious stones, which only the rich can afford to buy; as well as many cheap imitations of them. Indeed, the famous London jewellers get much of their stock from Birmingham. Guns, too,

are made here, and machines; things of all sizes and for all uses, from a pin to a steam-engine.

Let us get an order for Gillott's pen-factory. The rooms are large and airy; there is no unpleasant smell; there is such a whirr of machinery that you can hardly hear the words of your conductor, who is kindly explaining everything. Where does the noise come from? All round the room there are countless machines, each about the size of a sewing-machine, all of which are kept at work by a steam-engine, somewhere in the building. A woman, or a young girl, neat and well dressed, sits before each machine. What is she doing? That you cannot see. You see a sort of flutter of her hand, but that is all which tells you that she takes a pen from a heap, holds it under punch or press, puts it with another heap, and takes another pen. The conductor explains all this, but the workwomen are too rapid for you to follow their movements. First, a sheet of very thin steel is cut into little strips; these are softened in a furnace, and then cleaned by being twirled round very fast in a large cylinder, so as to rub against each other. Then these are given to the women, and are made to pass under one machine after another. One stamps each slip of steel with the maker's name, one cuts a slit with a fine cutting tool, in a third a punch presses the bit of steel into a hollow die to give it a round shape. When the pens are the right shape, they are heated, and then suddenly cooled to make them hard; then they are once more cleaned in a cylinder.

The quick movements of the women and girls are just as remarkable in the button factories; punching or pressing-machines do nearly all the work.

We have no time for a peep at Elkington's, the great plate factory, where teapots and spoons, candlesticks, forks, and a hundred other things are made; nor have we time to see the pin-making, or gun-making, or any of the other curious manufactures of this great 'toy-shop.'

THE COUNTIES OF LEICESTER AND RUTLAND.

I.

RUTLAND—the smallest county of England—is really like a corner of Leicestershire ; it is a very pleasant and pretty county, with hills and vales, woods and streams, blooming orchards, and many fine houses and parks. There is some rather high land in the north, which looks over a great deal of fertile and pleasant country. Then there is the beautiful Vale of Catmoss, with its woods and green pastures ; and in the south of the shire, part of the green and rather flat Welland Valley, as well as the valleys of the streams which join the Welland—little valleys, not a mile across, running from east to west, and divided from one another by ranges of low hills.

Often a noble mansion stands on one of these swelling hills, half hidden among great oaks and beeches; and there are green lawns, soft as velvet, all about the house ; and, beyond, the park, with its

clumps of trees and open glades, and deer browsing in herds. Sometimes the hills are covered with open woods, and sometimes the plough has been carried to the low hill-top, and it wears a plume of waving corn—wheat, or oats, or 'the free and bearded barley, the monarch of them all.'

Rutland is altogether a farming county, and both its wheat and barley are thought particularly good; so, too, is its cheese; the kind called Stilton is made in the Vale of Catmoss. There, and in the east of the county where the rivers meet, are broad pastures, where many cows are fed.

This little county has only two towns of any note, both clean market-towns—Uppingham, where there is a well-known school, and Oakham, the county town. At Oakham was born Jeffrey Hudson, the dwarf—a little man not much more than half a yard high, who went through many strange adventures. On one occasion, when Charles I. and his queen were making a royal progress through Rutland, no such dainty dish to set before the king could be thought of, as little Jeffrey served up in a cold pie. Then he was presented to the queen, and was petted and made much of by the ladies of the court, and droll, and sometimes sad tales are told of his doings—how the king's tall porter drew him out of his pocket once amidst a crowd of the court ladies; how he fought a duel with a noble lord; how the poor little man was carried off to Barbary, and was there sold as a slave; and, what with hard labour, what with much beating, how he there suddenly shot

up to twice the height he was before; and how he was at last redeemed and brought back to England.

II.

Leicestershire also is a farming county — a county famous for 'Leicester sheep,' for long and short-horned cattle, and for horses. The raising of 'stock,' as it is called, is the kind of farming for which Leicestershire is most noted—perhaps because a Mr. Bakewell, of Dishley, near Loughborough, did a great deal to improve the breeds both of sheep and cattle. Great quantities of butter and cheese are made too; and,—with its green pastures, high hedge-rows, and corn crops and green crops growing up to the tops of the low hills; with its woods and green meadows, and streams and vales,—the county of Leicester is as pleasant to look upon as any in England.

Though flat for the most part, it does not lie low, like the Fen counties; the green valley of the Soar, a tributary of the Trent, is the lowest part. The highest point in the county is Bardon Hill, by Charnwood Forest; though only 850 feet above the sea, it rises in such a flat district, that on a clear day you may see nearly right across England from the top of it—from the Welsh hills on the one side to Lincoln Cathedral on the other—such a wide view as is not to be had from any other point in the country.

Charnwood Forest is a forest no longer; it is the

highest land in the county, with hills and heaths, and rugged wastes, though most of it is now under cultivation.

Nearly filling the corner of the county west of Charnwood Forest, is the coal-field of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, measuring about ten miles every way, and with thick seams of coal reaching to a great depth, but separated from one another by beds of other substances. The chief collieries are at Ashby-de-la-Zouch, and at Moira, Coalville, and Swannington.

Leicestershire is not only a farming county, and a mining county, it is also one of the great manufacturing counties. The chief manufactures are like those of the neighbouring shire of Nottingham—stockings, mostly woollen, and bobbin net-lace. There is scarcely a village in the county where the cottagers may not be seen at work upon stocking-frames; in the large towns there are 'mills' like those of Lancashire, where many 'hands' are employed, and where the frames are worked by steam-power. Scarves and hoods, sleeves and vests, and other garments made with the stocking-stitch, are produced by these frames. The chief stocking and lace-making towns are,—Leicester, Loughborough, Lutterworth, Hinckley, and Melton Mowbray. The villages near these towns produce much of the goods. Wigston Magna, near Leicester, is the largest of these stocking-making villages.

III.—LEICESTER AND WOLSEY.

Leicester itself is a large and important manufacturing town, with many mills and many workpeople; and with a library and schools, lectures, and classes, to help these workpeople. It is built chiefly of red brick, and, notwithstanding the smoke, looks bright and clean. Many of the people are employed in the making of boots and shoes, as at Northampton; and there is a large market held in the town for the sale of the cheese, corn, and other farm produce of the county. It is an old town, and was one of the five Danish *burghs*.

The ruins of Leicester Abbey, which stand in a pleasant meadow, are the most interesting remains, for here died Wolsey, the great Prince-Cardinal, whose two houses of Whitehall and Hampton Court, were splendid enough to serve at his fall for royal palaces: who lived with all the state of a king, and was served by five hundred gentlemen of noble birth: who founded rich colleges, one at Ipswich, where he was born,—the son of a poor man,—and a very famous college at Oxford, since known as Christ Church, though it was first called Cardinal College in his honour. To this great estate, had his master, Henry VIII., raised him; for Wolsey was witty and wise, and knew both how to please the king and how to do his business. An end came to all his greatness. Wolsey would not serve his master in a certain matter, so he lost the king's favour; many things

he had done in the days of his power were inquired into, and messengers were sent to bring him to London that he might be tried for treason against the king.

'After the stout earl Northumberland
Arrested him at York, and brought him forward
(As a man sorely tainted,) to his answer,
He fell sick suddenly, and grew so ill,
He could not sit his mule.
At last, with easy roads, he came to Leicester,
Lodged in the abbey ; where the reverent abbot,
With all his convent, honourably received him ;
To whom he gave these words,— *O father abbot,*
An old man, broken with the storms of state,
Is come to lay his weary bones among ye ;
Give him a little earth for charity !
So went to bed : where eagerly his sickness
Pursued him still ; and, three nights after this,
About the hour of eight, full of repentance,
Continual meditations, tears, and sorrows,
. . . . . he died, fearing God.
This cardinal,
Though from an humble stock, undoubtedly
Was fashioned to much honour. From his cradle,
He was a scholar, and a ripe, and good one ;
Exceeding wise, fair spoken, and persuading :
Lofty, and sour, to them that loved him not ;
But to those men that sought him, sweet as summer.
And though he were unsatisfied in getting,
(Which was a sin,) yet in bestowing, madam,
He was most princely : ever witness for him
Those twins of learning, Ipswich and Oxford.

SHAKESPEARE.

He was buried in the Abbey Church ; nearly his last words were, 'If I had served my God as diligently as I have served my king, he would not have given me over in my grey hairs.'

IV.—LADY JANE GREY.

In Leicester town the Duke of Suffolk proclaimed his daughter Queen. The gentle Lady Jane was the favourite cousin of the young king, Edward VI. ; and while he lay a-dying, her father and her husband's father worked upon the king to leave the crown to her instead of to his sister Mary, who was a Roman Catholic. But the king had no right to leave the crown to anybody ; and the English people, though they did not wish for a Roman Catholic sovereign, would have the rightful queen, Mary, to reign over them. So the Lady Jane Grey was never crowned, but was made a prisoner in the Tower, and was shortly beheaded.

Poor young lady ! she suffered for the pride of her parents ; and hard parents they had been to her, who 'with pinches, nips, and bobs, and other ways,' made her life sad. The ruins of Bradgate Hall, her home as a child, are still to be seen, and close to the house is an avenue of chestnuts in which she may have often walked. Bradgate is on the edge of Charnwood Forest, about four miles from Leicester. Here, Roger Ascham, the schoolmaster who taught Queen Elizabeth, came to pay her a visit, of which he has left us the story :—

'Her parents, the Duke and Duchess, with all the household, were hunting in the park. I found her in the chamber, reading Plato in Greek, and that with as much delight as some gentlemen would read a merry tale . . . . I asked her why she would lose such a pastime in the park. Smiling, she answered me, "I wiste all their sport in the park is but a shadow to that pleasure that I find in Plato." . . . . "And how came you, madam, to this deep knowledge of pleasure, ... seeing not many women, but very few men have attained thereto?" "I will tell you," saith she. . . . . "One of the greatest benefits that ever God gave me, is that he sent me so sharp and severe parents, and so gentle a schoolmaster, ... who teacheth me so gently, so pleasantly, that I think all the time nothing whiles I am with him. And when I am called from him, I fall on weeping, because whatever else I do, but learning, is full of grief, trouble, fear, and whole misliking unto me. And thus my book hath been so much my pleasure." No lady which led so many pious, lived so few pleasant, days.'

The market-town of Ashby has the ruins of a castle which was one of the prisons of Mary, Queen of Scots; her room is still shown. The town of Ashby stands in a fertile vale, and took its name from Alan de la Zouch, to whom the lands belonged in the reign of Henry III.

V.—THE LOLLARDS.

Lutterworth has still the gown worn by John Wyclif, and the pulpit from which he preached. He was rector of this town in the days of Edward III., days when the Church of England was under the rule of the Pope of Rome, and when too many of the priests of that church were rich and proud, and lived evil lives. Wyclif taught men everywhere that the truth about religion was only to be found in the Bible, and that every man should be free to read the Bible for himself. That to say their prayers to saints, or to the images of saints, or to make pilgrimages to their shrines, could not help men at all. That the priests should be, like the other people of England, under the rule of the king, and should have nothing to do with the bishops of Rome.

These things Wyclif taught, not only at Oxford, where he was the Master of Balliol College, but all over England. He wrote many tracts as clever as they were true, which all who could, read. And he sent out a company of 'Simple Priests' all over the land; who went about in their long brown gowns, and preached plain sermons that everybody could understand, and spoke true words that everybody believed. So there were followers of Wyclif everywhere, and the country was full of 'Lollards,' that was the nickname given to them, perhaps because they sang many hymns to rather dull tunes.

Wyclif did another thing for the English people,

he gave them 'Wyclif's Bible' in their own English tongue, after long labour in his rectory at Lutterworth. For nigh two hundred years, copies of parts of this precious book, a gospel, or an epistle, were hidden away as the dearest treasure of many a household. Hidden in secret places, in the roof, or under the floor; for the Church of Rome was very powerful; and days came when if a man were known for a Lollard, he might be burnt at the stake. With brave patience these Lollards suffered; not only men, but tender women, and young lads and maidens; and the blood of these martyrs was the seed of the Church, and prepared England for the Reformation, which was fully worked out in the reigns of Henry VIII., and of his great daughter, Elizabeth. Wyclif himself was allowed to die in peace at his Lutterworth rectory, for though he had many enemies, he had friends who loved him well, and were able to protect him—among others, John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, the son of the king. But so bitter was the Church party against him, that thirty years after his death, his poor bones were dug up and burned, and the ashes were thrown into the Swift, the little stream on which Lutterworth stands, which carried them into Avon, 'Avon into Severn, Severn into the narrow seas, they into the main ocean; and thus the ashes of Wyclif are the emblem of his doctrine, which is now dispersed all the world over.'

VI.—BOSWORTH BATTLE.

In Bosworth Field, close by the pleasant town of Market Bosworth, was fought the last battle in the Wars of the Roses, which, counting this battle, had lasted thirty years. The Yorkist king was Richard III. The people hated so bad a man, and looked round to see who should be king in his room. Henry Tudor, Earl of Richmond, was descended from John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, and was the only prince of the House of Lancaster left. It was settled that he should marry the Princess Elizabeth of York, the daughter of Edward IV., and so unite the two Roses, and put an end for ever to the grievous war. So Henry, who was then in France, set sail for England, and landed at Milford Haven in Wales. By the time he had marched as far as Bosworth he was at the head of 6000 men. Here he was met by Richard III. with an army twice as large. The tyrant king cast his eyes round the field, and, seeing his rival at no great distance, he drove against him with fury, in the hope that either Henry's death or his own would decide the victory between them. He killed with his own hands Henry's standard-bearer; he dismounted another knight. He was now within reach of his rival, who declined not the combat, when Sir William Stanley, breaking in with his troops, surrounded Richard, who, fighting bravely to the last moment, perished by a fate too mild and honourable for his detestable crimes, Aug. 22, 1485. The body

of Richard, thrown carelessly across a horse, was carried to Leicester, amidst the shouts of the crowd, and was buried at the Grey Friars' Church of that place. Crown Hill, a little way from Bosworth Field, is still shown as the spot where Lord Stanley placed the crown upon Henry Tudor, and proclaimed him King Henry VII., the first of our Tudor sovereigns.

Another town of note is Melton Mowbray, in the fertile valley of the Wreak, which joins the Soar a few miles above Leicester. People who have eaten Melton Mowbray pies know what pork-pies ought to be; and as they are sold all over England, no doubt a good many people do know. It is a market-town, where Stilton cheese is sold, and corn and other things grown in the county; a busy town too, where stockings and lace are made; and a right merry town between the months of November and March, for it is the centre of a famous hunting country, and here gentlemen meet for the Melton fox-hunt.

To the north of Melton Mowbray lies the beautiful Vale of Bever, 'large, and very plentiful of good corn and grass;' and at the head of it is Bever, or Belvoir Castle, upon a steep hill of red gritstone—such another princely brow as Windsor, with a wide view over a pleasant and fertile land.

THE COUNTIES OF HERTFORD AND BEDFORD.

I.

THESE are both farming counties where there is scarcely a bit of waste land anywhere, except the round tops of the Chilterns, which divide the two shires. These hills form part of one of the long chalk ranges that leave Salisbury Plain; ploughed fields and woods climb the slopes, and the short turf of the hill-sides makes sweet mutton, like that bred upon the Downs.

Both counties have many woods, and many parks, with lordly mansions, where the wealthy nobles live; and though there are no hills of any height except the Chilterns, these are not among the flat shires; the ground swells and sinks with a pleasant rise and fall, and there are often clumps of trees upon the uplands.

Many cows are to be seen grazing, chiefly in Beds, where butter is made for the London market. There are fine pasture-fields in the north, with soil rather

wet, like that of the Fen counties on either side. Along the banks of the Great Ouse river, which makes endless loops and turns as it takes its course through North Beds, there are beautiful broad green meadows, made rich with the river mud of Ouse. Famous onions and cucumbers are grown in the south-west of Beds, where the sandy soil suits these vegetables.

Hertford is, on the whole, a prettier county than Beds, with more woods, and parks, and hills; besides the Chilterns on the north-west and west, it has low hills along the Middlesex border. It is also a fruit-growing county, with large cherry and apple-orchards, where fruit is grown for Covent Garden market. Indeed, Herts is a friendly neighbour-county to the great city, which it supplies, not only with fruit, but with all kinds of table vegetables—lettuces, and green peas, and cauliflowers, raised in its large market-gardens; with flowers, too, for which Herts is famous —especially for its roses, which take first prizes in the London shows.

Better than flowers and fruit, better than peas and potatoes, is the water of the New River to London—the water which is collected in large reservoirs at Hornsey and Stoke Newington, at which places it is filtered to clear it from impurities, and then caused to flow into pipes, which carry it all over London. Where does it come from, this water, with which so many London tea-kettles are filled? There are some springs of delightful water close by Ware (where John Gilpin's friend lived); Chad Well is the largest. To bring the fresh water from these springs to thirsty

London was the thought of one Sir Hugh Middelton, who lived some 250 years ago. He had a channel dug, forty miles long, for the stream to flow in, and this was the *New River*—really *new* then, though it is old now in all but name. Some alterations have been made since then: the course of the river has been made shorter: but it is still to these same Hertford springs that London owes much of its water.

Though there is much gardening done in Herts, both of these counties are for the most part under the plough: perhaps there is, for its size, more ploughed land in Bedford than in any other English county. Upon this ploughed land wheat, barley, and oats, potatoes and turnips, peas and beans, are grown. Wheat is the chief crop, and the white wheat straw of these counties is put to an important use. Throughout Herts, and Beds, in Bucks, and in parts of Essex and Suffolk, in all which counties the wheat straw is of the right kind, the women and girls are at work in the cottages making straw-plait, while the men are busy in the fields. Thirteen straws are generally plaited together, and worked much in the same way as broad plaits of hair. It is easy work, for which no tools are wanted, and which the families of labouring men can do in their own cottages. Most plaiters can make fifteen yards a-day; good workers can do much more.

The straw-plait gives work to many persons besides the plaiters: to the bleachers and cleaners, to the women who make the straw into hats and bonnets, and to the people who buy up these hats and bonnets, and

send them all over the country and to other lands for sale.

The towns in Herts where straw-plait is most largely made, are the old town of Hitchin, Baldock, Royston, Tring, Hemel Hempstead, Watford—in which and in the towns and villages about there are mills, in which much excellent paper is made—and St. Albans. These are also the chief market-towns of the county.

The two most famous straw-plaiting towns are in Beds—Dunstable and Luton—both among the Chilterns. The kind of plait called 'Dunstable,' is much esteemed. At Luton 'Tuscan' plait is made, Close by Luton is Luton Hoo or High Luton Park; Bedford, Biggleswade, Ampthill, and Leighton Buzzard, in which is an old stone cross, are also straw-plaiting towns. These are the market-towns of Beds; and in them, and, indeed, all over the county, another kind of cottage-work is carried on—the making of pillow lace, a poor trade since the Nottingham frame for lace-making was invented.

The Lea rises near Dunstable, in the 'Dunstable Downs,' as the Chilterns are there called; it flows through Herts and Middlesex, and joins the Thames below London.

Two others of the 'sea-born brothers,' 'who swell with tributary urns his flood,'—the flood of 'Old Father Thames'—gather their waters in Herts, 'Colne, whose dark streams his flowery islands lave,' and the Brent.

II.—JOHN BUNYAN.

There are various places of interest in the county of Bedford. Near the market town of Woburn is Woburn Abbey, an ancient abbey, which has been converted into a very stately palace indeed, the seat of the Duke of Bedford, with many books, and pictures, and statues, beautiful and rare, with a wide park and a model park farm. There is Ampthill, where once stood Ampthill Castle,

'The mournful refuge of an injured queen,'

Katherine, the first queen of Henry VIII., whom he put away that he might be free to marry another lady.

And, most interesting of all, there is Bedford, among the rich meadows of Ouse, whose valley is here called the Vale of Bedford; an old town, with a rich free grammar-school, the money to keep up which was left long ago by one Sir William Harpur.

Bedford is a very quiet town, and its interest lies, not in the memory of dukes or queens, but in that of John Bunyan, a tinker by trade, who was for twelve years a prisoner in the old gaol which stood upon the bridge. Very sad for him, but well for us, for in that old gaol he saw Doubting Castle and the Slough of Despond, and the land where the 'shining ones commonly walked, because it was on the borders of heaven;' there he saw Pilgrim leave the city of Destruction, and climb the Hill Difficulty on his way to

the heavenly city, which was on a hill 'higher than the clouds.' Perhaps we should never have had the delightful and helpful story of *Pilgrim's Progress*, one of the best books in the world, if John Bunyan had not been a prisoner all those years in Bedford gaol, where he supported himself by making tagged thread laces.

What had he done that he suffered this long captivity? His fault was, that he preached in a Baptist chapel at Bedford without leave—without a license. Because he would not promise to give up preaching he was sent to prison, and there he still preached to many who were prisoners, like himself, for their religion. He lived in troublous times; through the Civil War, and through the days of the Commonwealth, which were happy days for the Puritans. But when the king, Charles II., was restored, he and his friends were bitter against the men who had put Charles I. to death, and a persecution arose against the Puritans. Thousands of them were shut up in gaols all over the country, and, among the rest, John Bunyan.

He was the son of a poor tinker at Elstow, a village about a mile from Bedford. Even as a child of nine or ten his thoughts were full of good things. He heard heavenly voices and saw visions of heaven, and he was often very sad because he cared for games and sports; for the Puritans of those old days had rather hard thoughts about God, faithfully as they tried to serve Him; they could not think it pleased the loving Father of us all to see His children happy and glad as well as good.

The young tinker passed through a time of great sadness on account of his sinfulness. He says of it, 'I walked to a neighbouring town, and sat down upon a settle in the street, and fell into a very deep pause about the most fearful state my sin had brought me to, because I had sinned against my Saviour. Oh, how happy now was every creature over I! for they stood fast and kept their station, but I was gone and lost.'

At last, after more than two years of this struggle, the darkness broke. Bunyan felt himself freed from the burthen of his sin. He joined a Baptist church at Bedford, and a few years later he became famous as a preacher.

Six months after the king's return, he was thrown into Bedford gaol, and there he put his own struggle under the burthen of sin into the story of Pilgrim and his burthen.

III.—ST. ALBANS, HERTS.

The town of St. Albans stands where stood the city of Verulam, one of the thirty-three great cities left behind by the Romans. The Watling Street passed under its walls, and it was here that the 'British warrior-queen,' Boadicea, fell upon the Roman citizens with a large army of her people, and slew many thousands of them, because they had injured her people and wronged her daughter, and had scourged her, queen as she was, with rods. Here was slain the first martyr for the faith of Christ who died upon British ground. He was a soldier in the

Roman army, and a pagan; his name was Alban. The Roman emperor at this time, Diocletian, was a pagan also, who commanded that the Christians in the Roman empire should deny Christ or die. So they fled, and hid themselves where they could, and one holy man took refuge with the soldier Alban. So pure were the thoughts of this good man, and so gentle his ways, that Alban learned of him the love of Christ. Ere many days Alban heard that the soldiers were seeking for the man he had hidden in his house. He dressed himself up in the long gown worn by his guest, and allowed himself to be taken for the Christian whom he had saved. He was brought before the judge, and confessed himself a Christian; was beaten, and tortured, and condemned to death.

He was taken to the top of a hill hard by, a hill clothed with flowers, and which sloped down to a beautiful plain. A great multitude of persons followed, and the martyr's face was so full of heavenly joy that the executioner cast down the sword he had carried ready drawn, fell down at his feet, and begged that he might suffer in his stead. Another executioner was easily found.

Five hundred years later a great abbey was raised here to his memory, and the town still bears the name of St. Albans.

This rich and famous abbey received many visits from royal persons. Henry VI. was staying at the abbey when upon a May day in the year 1455 was fought the first battle of St. Albans, the first battle in

the grievous Wars of the Roses. A sad time for England followed. For sixteen years war raged up and down the land, and though the people in the towns went on with their business, all the great barons and their retainers fought either for the house of York or for that of Lancaster. The king belonged to the house of Lancaster. He could not see any reason why he should not be king as long as he lived, and leave the crown to his son. He said, 'My father was king, his father also was king; I myself have worn the crown for forty years, from my cradle (his father, Henry V., had died when he was a baby). You have all sworn fealty to me as your sovereign; how, then, can my right be disputed?' The king was right enough; there was no good reason why he should not be king. But he was often ill, and not able to govern the land himself, so things went wrong, and the king was blamed. When Richard, Duke of York, said he had the best right to be king of England, he found a great many ready to support him. His claim was, that he and the king were both descended from Edward III., and that he was, in some way, more nearly related to this king than Henry was.

At this first battle of St. Albans, Richard of York did not claim the crown; he said he only fought against the Duke of Somerset, who was on the king's side. The battle only lasted an hour, but Henry's army was beaten, and he was left, wounded in the neck by an arrow, a prisoner to the Duke of York. The king remained on the field until he was quite alone, under his royal banner; then he took refuge in a baker's

shop, where Richard of York came to him, and, bending the knee, bade him 'Rejoice, for Somerset is slain.' Then he took the king back to his rooms in the abbey, and thence carried him to London.

Other battles followed up and down the land; sometimes the Red Rose won, sometimes the White Rose. Those of the house of Lancaster chose the red rose as their badge, while those of York wore the white; and the civil war was thus known over Europe as the quarrel between the two Roses.

More than once, while the war went on, the king, and his queen, Margaret, and his little son, Edward, Prince of Wales, spent their Easter holidays at the abbey, and were very kindly entertained by the abbot, John.

It was the custom for guests to make rich presents to these great abbeys, and upon one visit the king ordered his treasurer to give his best robe to the abbot. The treasurer knew the poor king had not a second robe to his back, so he whispered to the abbot that some day he would send him a present of money instead. The king heard the whisper, however, and made the abbot send to London for the money at once.

Upon a Shrove Tuesday, six years after the first battle, the two armies met once again near St. Albans. The king was on the field, but he was brought there as a prisoner by the Yorkists. The battle lasted long, and when night set in the Yorkists fled, though the mighty Earl of Warwick was their leader. The

victory was with the queen, and when she heard that her dear lord was upon the field, she took her son, and hastened to greet him, and bring him again to his own friends. Then the royal family and their northern lords went to the abbey, at the doors of which they were met by the abbot John and his monks, who chanted hymns of triumph and thanksgiving. The king and his party returned thanks for the victory and for his deliverance.

The abbey church still remains. It is built in the form of a cross, and is the longest church in England. Matthew Paris, who wrote the History of England for two hundred years, from the Conquest till his own death, was one of the monks of this old abbey.

There are many places in Herts to which stories belong. Hertford, the county town, is an old town, with large fairs and markets, and rich free schools: it stands upon the River Lea. Hither, long ago, came the Danes; up the Thames they sailed to the mouth of the Lea, then up the Lea, as far as to where the town of Ware now stands, and there they anchored their light ships, and laid siege to Hertford town. But King Alfred was patient and wise; he had three new channels dug for Lea waters, and the river flowed away from the Danish ships, and left them stranded high and dry, an easy prey for the English; and the Danes, weak without their ships, left Hertford, and marched across country towards the Severn.

In the old castle of Hertford, four or five kings

have held court—each of the kings of the house of Lancaster; and here Edward III. kept his two prisoner kings, David of Scotland and John of France. Queen Elizabeth, too, held her court here; and Hatfield House, about six miles off, was given to her by her brother. Here the Princess Elizabeth dwelt as a sort of prisoner at large during the reign of Mary. The tower may still be seen from the window of which the unhappy princess watched the milkmaid at her work, and envied her humble lot; and there is the trunk of the oak under which she stood when she learnt that her sister was dead, and she was Queen of England.

Close by Hertford, on the east side, is the Rye House, famous because a man who lived in it in the reign of Charles II. formed with some others a plan to shoot the king. This Rye House Plot was discovered, and led to the death of good and great men who had nothing to do with it—Lord Russell and Algernon Sydney—whose most unjust execution is among the things our country must always be ashamed of.

THE FEN COUNTIES.

I.

THE fens lie round the low shores of the Wash, in the counties of Lincoln and Norfolk, and stretch far inland into the three shires of Northampton, Cambridge, and Huntingdon.

Soil which is always soaked with water is a *fen*, or, as it is more often called, a bog or a marsh: indeed, the name *fens* only belongs to this one great Eastern Level, which stretches fifty miles north and south, and twenty or thirty inland.

Dreary enough the Fen country is to people who are used to hills; a dead level everywhere, stretching away to the far-off horizon; never so much as a hedge to vary the scene, nothing but the straight gleaming water lines, often broad and deep as rivers, which cut and score the country in every direction. These are the dykes or drains, bordered by high green turf banks, with here and there a windmill or a steam-engine to pump up the water into the dykes, in which it often rises higher than the land about.

Long lines of pollard willows, all just like one

another, stretch away for miles upon these banks by the never-ending dykes ; here and there, are swampy osier beds, or beds of rushes ; deep ditches filled with water, hidden by the waving sedges, divide the fields from one another.

Dull as you would think the country from this description, the view from any of these same dyke-banks on an autumn day, a bright, sunny day, is simply glorious. You are in the midst of a wide sea of golden corn or deep green pasture, which stretches away out of sight on every side. There are patches of barren swamp, the haunts of coot and hern, where reeds and rushes grow, and wild fowl swarm, but on the whole there is no richer land in England, no land which bears more bountiful crops of goodly corn.

Certainly there is no part of England in which man deserves a better harvest, or does more to earn it. Nature, if left to herself, would have all this precious land, which now brings forth bread for thousands, a soaking bog, into which a man might sink to his neck.

All this Fen country is not only very flat, but it lies very low, hardly a few feet above the sea level : low shores slope down to the Wash. The piece of Lincolnshire at the east end of the Wash is so low that the sea would come in were it not kept out by earthen mounds. This piece of Lincoln is called Holland, or hollow land, like the Holland over the sea, where the people have even more trouble to keep their land above water.

It was a mistake to say these low shores *slope* to the Wash ; that is exactly what they do not do ; and the four rivers, Witham, Welland, Nen, and Ouse, which flow into the Wash, find scarce a bit of fall in the land to help their waters on. You know how much easier it is for water to run off a slope than off a level. Thus the rivers are very slow in carrying their own proper waters to the sea ; and when heavy rains come, they are flooded, and the country for miles around is under water.

There is one other reason why this Fen country is wet and spongy. If you have ever made mud-pies, you know how nicely they hold water, that it will not soak through. The surface of the fens is covered with dark brown, or black, crumbly peat, made of decayed leaves and branches mixed with earth. This peat, which makes the very best soil when it is properly dug and looked after, lies in a mud-pie ; that is, there is a layer of clay underneath, through which waste water cannot make its way. Now you can understand why the Fens should be so swampy ; the water cannot flow off, because the land is flat, has no slope ; it cannot sink far into the earth, because the clay holds it ; so there it would lie, filling the peat on the surface, and making the whole Fen country an unwholesome swamp, but that men come to the aid of nature and make ways for the water to escape. All the wonderful dykes which cross the country are just channels which have been dug for the water to fall into ; and as dykes and deep ditches have been cut across the Fens everywhere, by means of which the

waste water at last finds its way to the sea, this Eastern Level is no longer a swamp, but a most fertile district.

How comes there to be peat in a part of the country where there are no trees, seeing that peat is just the remains of a decayed forest? Great trunks of trees have been found buried in the peat; and the bones, and horns, and tusks of forest animals, the deer, the beaver, and the wild boar, as well as the canoes of the men of the forest, the ancient Britons. So it is clear that at one time, before English history began, there was a great forest on these low lands. Even in those early days the waters of the sea came pouring in, in high spring-tides. By degrees the forest was buried up in the sands these high tides left behind; and a forest, buried in this way for ages, turns into peat. When the Romans were in the land they did their best to keep the sea out; there is still a long line of 'Roman bank' to be seen, passing near Boston, Spalding, Wisbeach, and other places; they made drains to carry off the waters, too, and raised banks to keep in the rivers.

In the Saxon days, and later, much of the fens belonged to rich abbeys; the monks drained the land, and the vine, and corn, and abundance of all good things rewarded their labour. In those days, a great deal of English history took place in these flat fens.

By-and-by, after Henry VIII. had turned the monks adrift, the dykes and drains got out of order;

and the mouths of the four rivers became choked up, so that their waters could not escape; the sea-banks were neglected and the sea broke through, and the whole district became full of stagnant pools and spongy earth, unwholesome and useless.

A great part of the Fens, measuring forty miles each way, and including a part of each of the five fen counties, is called the Bedford Level. Francis, Duke of Bedford, in the reign of Charles I., thought it a pity that so much good land should lie waste, so he got some other persons to join with him, and they formed a company for raising banks and digging dykes in the fens. The Old Bedford River and the New Bedford River were both made by this company. They run side by side, a mile apart. They are both twenty-one miles long, and the New River is one hundred feet wide; the Old River is not so wide. They are in the counties of Cambridge and Norfolk, and join two parts of the Ouse together, so that, running by a straight course, the river waters may flow away quickly. Countless drains have been cut since then, called leams, or cuts, or dykes, or eaux, or droves. Car Dyke in Lincoln is a broad river, more than forty miles long. Lincoln and Cambridge are the most *fenny* of the fen counties.

The northern half of Cambridge, as well as part of Huntingdon, is in the Isle of Ely; not an island out in the open sea—only an island, because all round it there were once rivers, or water-ways; a wild, out-of-the-way tract it was at one time, which only those who knew the way through the

marshes could get at: and thereby hangs many a tale.

The Great Eastern Railway carries you through the Isle now, and the only sign left of the old wild marshes, is that the whole island is cut up by dykes into four-cornered fens, each fen named after the village or town close by.

Crowland, in Northampton, was upon such another island, only a much smaller one, and to it, also, many a tale belongs. It is an island no longer. The Huntingdon fens were at one time famous for their meres; shallow pools of stagnant water, overgrown with reeds, the homes of water-fowl; but the water has been drained from many of these, even from Whittlesea Mere, the largest.

All the wide Fenland was part of Danelagh, as you may tell by looking at your maps, for all the towns that end in 'by' were Danish towns.

The Saxons did not let these Vikings of the north take the eastern counties for their own without many a hard fight; but fresh swarms were always coming across the North Sea in their black ships, and the burning and the slaying went on.

The rich abbeys in the Fens had a weary time of it, for the Danes knew that there, if anywhere, they should find gold, and whatever there was of costly and rare in the land. So over and over again the abbeys were burnt, and the monks slaughtered, and the precious things carried away by the pagan Danes.

But all this passed; they left Thor and Odin for

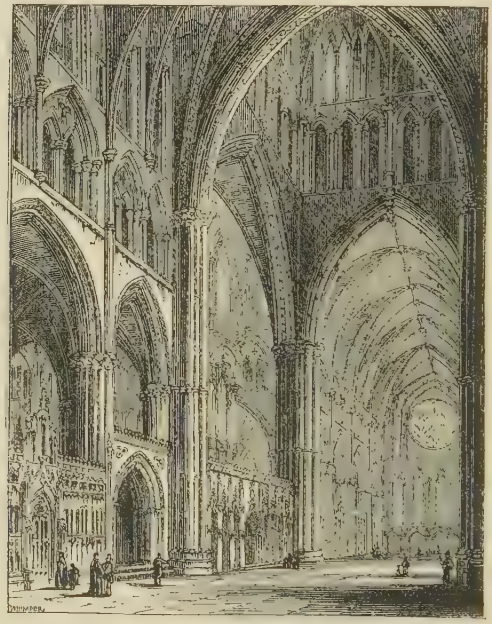
'the White Christ.' The abbeys which the fathers had destroyed the sons rebuilt; and often, casting away axe and sword, they entered them as monks themselves; and the three great abbeys of Peterborough, Ely, and Crowland, became their holy places, where they decked the altars with gold and jewels, with silks from the far east, and with furs from the north.

A brave race these Danelagh folk were—Danes that had become English—and among them, in their house at Bourne, chose to dwell the Earl Leofric, who was a friend of the Danes, and the Lady Godiva, who was of Danish blood herself: it was their son, Hereward, who held the Isle of Ely, in the midst of the Fens, for full seven years against the Conqueror; as may be read in Miss Martineau's *Camp of Refuge*, or in Kingsley's *Hereward, the Last of the English.*

II.—LINCOLNSHIRE.

THERE is not much more to be said about this county. Farming is the chief business of the people, and famous farmers the Lincoln folk are. The towns, as Spilsby, Louth, Grantham, Market-Rasen, are mostly *market*-towns, where the wheat and flour, peas and beans, potatoes, turnips, and carrots, are brought by the farmers on certain days of the week to be sold to traders from a distance. Flax is brought to market, too; for there are large fields of flax to be seen in Lincoln, grown, not for the sake of its pretty blue flower, but for the fibres of its stalk, which, when

properly prepared, make the thread of which linen is woven. In most of the market-towns, fairs are held for the sale of horses and cattle, sheep and pigs, for all of which Lincolnshire is famous. Some of



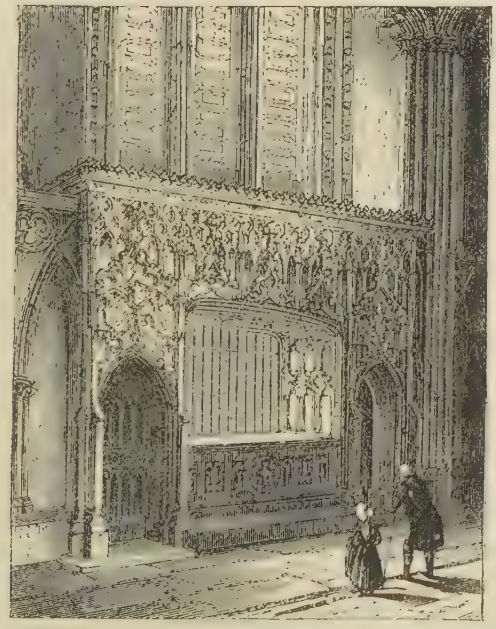
LINCOLN CATHEDRAL: WESTERN TRANSEPT.

the farm produce is taken to the ports to be sent away by sea.

Lincoln county has a long low coast, and but few ports, because there are few safe shelters for ships. There is the long flat coast on the Humber,

which is so filled with shifting sand-banks that only very skilful pilots can guide their ships through.

Grimsby stands at Humber mouth, and may become a great port one day, because good docks



LINCOLN CATHEDRAL: BISHOP LONGLANDS' MONUMENT.

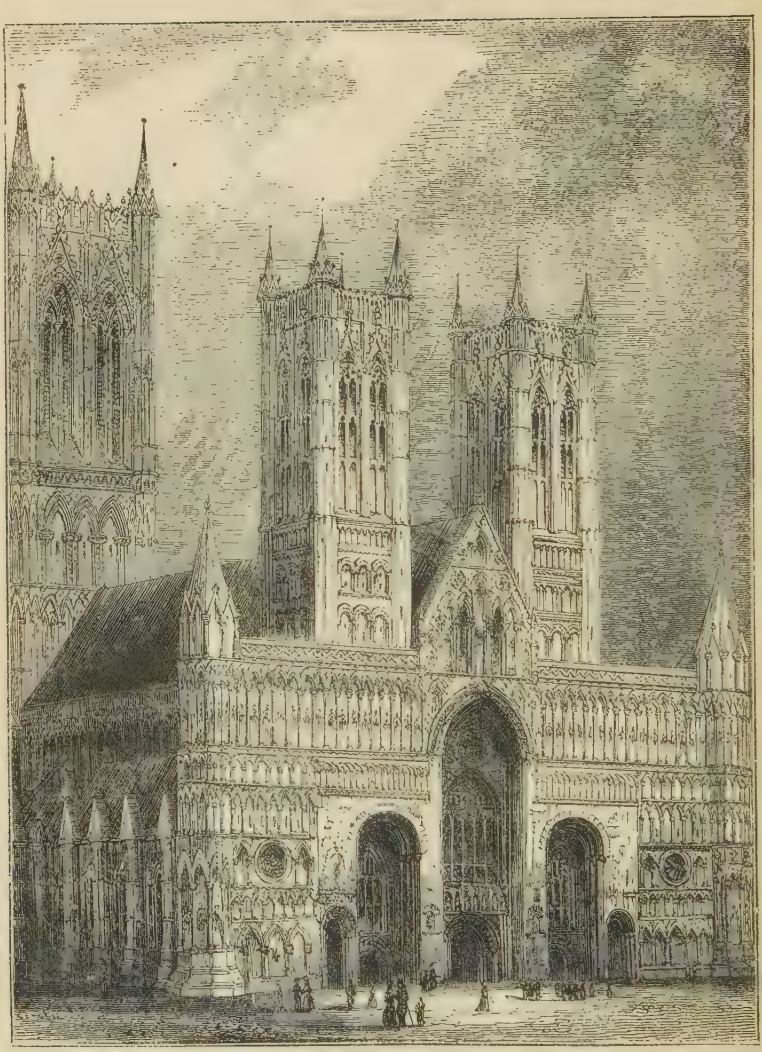
have been built there. There is no important port on the low North Sea-shore; but on the Wash are Boston, by Witham mouth, and Spalding on the Welland. Boston has a name-town across the Atlantic—one of the most famous towns in the United States. In the

early days of his reign, before the Civil War began, Charles I. tried to make all the English people belong to the Church of England. The men of the Fens loved liberty too well to submit to any rule about such things, and many of them took ship for free America. The Boston folk are thought to have founded the Boston of the States. At any rate, it was so named in honour of them.

Spalding was a favourite landing-place for the black boats of the Northmen, as it is the port for Stamford, one of the five great *burghs* of Danelagh. Stamford is an important and busy town, with an iron-foundry, and machine-works. Near it is 'Burleigh House, by Stamford Town,' which belonged to Queen Elizabeth's famous minister. It is a very splendid house, with one hundred and forty-five rooms, and many precious pictures, and carvings, and statues; with beautiful gardens, too, where are a labyrinth and wilderness, and smooth terraces and musical fountains, and every sort of rare and beautiful flower and tree.

A story about a Lord of Burleigh is told by Mr. Tennyson, the poet, who is a Lincolnshire man, and so knows all about it; and who knows, too, how to tell stories in the most delightful way.

Lincolnshire is not without its uplands. There are the round, swelling chalk wolds, which reach from the Humber to Spilsby; and, further west, running in a straight line through the county, are the Lincoln Heights, upon which the Romans made their *Ermine Street*, a good road still. Lincoln city, with its Castle and glorious Cathedral, stands upon one



LINCOLN CATHEDRAL.

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of these hills ; thus the Cathedral, one of the finest in England, can be seen from all the flat country round. It has a famous bell, called 'Great Tom,' which measures more than two yards across at the mouth. Lincoln is a very old city ; it was a great Roman town, and a Roman gate still remains. There are engine-works in the city, where steam-ploughs, and threshing, and other machines used on farms, are made.

At Gainsborough, the Trent, the great river of middle England, enters Lincoln from Nottingham ; it is wide and deep enough to carry quite large vessels up to this town. It makes straight for the north, where it meets the Yorkshire Ouse, and both together enter the broad Humber estuary. The tide makes its way easily up the Humber ; but when it gets to the narrow Trent mouth, it rises and rolls in like a wall of water, reaching right across the river—such another *bore* during the spring tides as occurs in the mouths of the Severn and Avon ; but here it is called the Ager. The little piece of Lincolnshire to the west of Trent is called the Isle of Axholme, and is low and marshy like the isles of the Fens.

III.—NORFOLK.

ANOTHER shire of the Danelagh, nearly as flat as a table everywhere, except at the north corner of the Wash coast, where some chalk downs end in Hunstanton cliffs, upon which is a lighthouse. King's Lynn, at the mouth of the Great Ouse, is the port for this part of Norfolk.

Norfolk, like Lincoln, is a great farming county: indeed, there is no English county in which the farmers are more skilful in the management of their land. One thing they are particular about is to have different crops growing in the same field in following years; thus, a field yellow with corn one year, might be sweet with bean-blossom the next, and then be a potato or a turnip field. The reason for this is that all plants do not take the same kind of food out of the earth with their little hungry mouths. What wheat will not touch the potato will take and be thankful for. So the farmers arrange a round, or, as it is called, a *rotation of crops*, to follow one another in order. Sometimes a *four-shift*, sometimes a *five-shift* rotation is employed: that is, four or five different crops follow one another, and then the round begins again. The four English kinds of corn—wheat, barley, oats, and rye; beans and peas, potatoes, turnips, and carrots, are all grown in Norfolk. There are prettier crops, too: fields of red clover, fields of the crocus flower from which saffron is made, fields of the delicate blue flax flower, and other fields, gay with the bright blue handsome flower of the chicory plant, the large roots of which are cut into squares and roasted, and then ground into chicory.

The very finest Christmas turkeys come from Norfolk; geese, just as good; and sheep and bullocks, pigs and horses, all get an excellent living in this rich shire. Of the chief towns of the county, Wymondham and Attleborough, East Dereham, Aylsham, Diss, Thetford, with several others, are market-towns.

Thetford was the chief town in the east of England in Saxon days; it had eight monasteries, and as many as twenty churches; but three times over was the unhappy town plundered and burnt by the Danes.

Thetford might have got over these misfortunes, but when, in Norman days, the cathedral was built at Norwich, that became the chief town of the county. It is a pleasant city, built on a hill—a thing to be proud of in this county—with the Wensum flowing at its feet, just close to where it joins the Yare. The city covers a good deal of ground, and there are openings, planted with trees, from among which the towers of the churches rise, so that an old writer speaks of it as 'Norwich (as you please), either a city in an orchard, or an orchard in a city.' The old castle is still standing on a high hill, in the middle of the town—or rather, just the keep remains. The cathedral is a good specimen of Norman architecture.

The eastern counties have always been friendly to the people of the low-lying lands over the sea. These Flemings have been for centuries famous as skilful weavers, and the Conqueror brought over some of them, who settled in Norwich, to teach their art to his English subjects.

Later, Edward III. invited parties of these same Flemish weavers to settle in England; for the King thought it a pity that the fine wool of the English sheep—the finest anywhere—should be sent to Flanders to be worked up into cloth. Many of these Flemings, also, settled in Norwich, and taught the citizens how to make cloth, and, in later days, crape. Still

later, in Elizabeth's reign, more than three thousand of these same people came to seek a home in Norwich; for they were Protestants, and were so persecuted by the King of Spain and the Netherlands, a Roman Catholic, that they had no rest in their own land. Norwich made room for them; and busy and useful people they proved, bringing with them, this time, a new manufacture, a stuff made of a mixture of silk and wool.

Norwich is still famous for the manufactures brought in by the Flemings, worsteds and woollens, silk, crape, and mixed stuffs.

Norwich was, at one time, Norwich-by-the-sea, and the spot where part of Yarmouth now stands was under sea when the Conqueror came; the Yare, which it stands at the mouth of, fell then into a broad estuary—another Wash, perhaps—which reached inland as far as Norwich. By degrees, however, a line of sand-banks was formed by the sea and river between them, across the mouth of this estuary. Though the river still made its way out, the tide could no longer get in; the waters drained off, and what was at one time an arm of the sea, is now covered with villages and busy farms.

This new land still lies very low, and the Yare widens out into a sort of lake, four miles across, before it reaches the sea. The Waveney and the Bure, which join the Yare near Yarmouth, both flow through very low land, and spread out into many pools. Indeed Eastern Norfolk is nearly full of these pools—*broads*, as they are called in the county, pools often

three yards deep, and fringed with tall bulrushes. These pools are mostly in lonely spots, and are the haunts of water-hen and wild duck, heron and king-fisher: indeed, the wild fowl and fishes have it pretty much to themselves. The rivers overflow after heavy rains, and leave the broads filled when they return to their banks.

Yarmouth is a busy, pleasant, trading town, which has always had so much to do with foreign sailors, that it is like a foreign town itself. It has many herring-houses, where the herrings caught off the coast are cured, made into 'Yarmouth bloaters.' The grand church of St. Nicholas, here, is the largest parish church in England.

If the sea has been turned out on the east, it is making steady advances into Norfolk on the north. At the village of Sherringham, near Cromer, it has gained as much as fifty feet in five years. Ships may anchor where villages once stood. Cromer is a charming watering-place, where the sun may be seen to rise and set in the sea. Admiral Lord Nelson was a native of Norfolk.

IV.—NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

THIS midland county, though it has no mountains, and no very high hills, is not a dead level, like parts of the eastern counties; it is bordered by hills on the north-east and south. Indeed, gentle hills, cultivated to the top, valleys full of rich crops and watered by streams, with here and there a wood, are to be seen

from any height in the eastern half of the county. From the hill upon which Naseby village stands, for instance, the greatest height in several counties round, and the hill in which four rivers rise—the Welland, the Nen, the Swift, and the famous Warwickshire Avon—all flowing in different directions, and thereby proving that Naseby is the highest land about.

On this height of Naseby was fought the last great fight of the Civil War, which ended 'fatally for the royal cause,' as says the pillar which has been raised on the spot in memory of the battle. The Parliament forces were upon the hill and held the village; the king's army advanced up the rising ground to attack and dislodge them. The heat of the battle was on the rise of the hill towards the trees. Cromwell concealed his men behind the trees and the little rises of the hill; thus they took the king's friends by surprise, and easily drove them back with great loss. Before the fight was over, about 800 men were killed on each side, but the Parliamentary army took thousands of prisoners and all the guns. The king fled, and was followed as far as Leicester, and any stragglers found on the field were slaughtered by the Ironsides.

The narrow north-west corner of the county is fen, the great Peterborough fen, from the midst of which rises the beautiful minster. Bordering the fens, is Rockingham Forest, all that is left of the vast forest in which Hereward and his men lived a wild life in the greenwood.

Northamptonshire is not altogether a farming county; most of the land is laid out in farms, and

very fine cattle are fed on the pastures by the sides of the rivers and in the fens. But this county is bordered on the east by manufacturing shires, and the towns here are not just market-towns, but busy places, where more people live by making shoes, and stockings, and lace, than live in the villages by farmwork.

The chief shoemaking places are Northampton, Daventry, Towcester, Kettering, and Wellingborough, with the villages near them. Lace is made at several of these same towns, Daventry, Wellingborough, Towcester, Higham-Ferrers, Brackley; and the women in the villages round these towns work hard at their pillows. Stockings are made at Daventry.

The eastern half of the county is almost shut in between the rivers Welland and Nen. The old county-town, Northampton, with the ruins of a castle, stands upon the Nen. It is a rather handsome town, built of stone; most of the people are employed in making boots and shoes. The chief ornament of Northampton is the Queen Eleanor's Cross, which stands about a mile from the town, on rising ground, at the side of the road, backed by trees. There are four statues of the queen in the cross, all with the same gentle, calm, sweet face, and all graceful and dignified, and like a queen. It is pleasant that we have some likenesses left of the dear queen, the beloved of all England. Her sorrowing husband, Edward I., had fifteen of these beautiful crosses raised to her memory, at least so the old chroniclers say. Of these only three remain, and, of the three, Northamptonshire has two, the second being at Geddington, close by Kettering.

To Fotheringay Castle, upon the Nen, close by the town of Oundle, belongs the end of the sad story of another queen, the beautiful Mary, Queen of Scots. The story of her life is a very sad one, for, beautiful as she was, she was not wise or good, and was led to do such wrong and foolish things that her people of Scotland rose in arms against her, and she fled to her cousin, the Queen Elizabeth, for protection. Elizabeth received her, but not as a guest. She kept her a prisoner for nineteen weary years. Mary had many Roman Catholic friends in the land who thought she ought to be Queen of England instead of the Protestant Elizabeth. These friends of hers were constantly making plots to set her free, and, worse, to kill Elizabeth in order that Mary might reign in England. The English queen and her friends thought there was no safety for her as long as Mary was alive, so she was tried before forty-seven noblemen in Fotheringay Castle, and condemned to die, because she had helped to plot against the queen's life.

'Mary received the news very quietly. She said, "Death, which puts an end to all my miseries, shall be to me most welcome." The last day arrived. Towards morning she arose and dressed herself in a rich habit of silk and velvet. Having passed into the hall, where was erected the scaffold, covered with black, she saw, without dismay, the executioners, and all the preparations for death. Here her old servant, Sir Andrew Melvill, took an affecting leave of her. She now began, with the aid of her two women, to disrobe herself, and the executioner also lent his hand

to assist them. She smiled, and said that she was not accustomed to undress herself before so large a company, nor to be served by such valets. Her servants, seeing her in this condition, ready to lay her head upon the block, burst into tears and lamentations. She turned about to them, put her finger upon her lips, as a sign for them to be silent, and, having given them her blessing, desired them to pray for her. One of her maids covered her eyes with a handkerchief; she laid herself down without any sign of fear, and her head was parted from her body at two strokes by the executioner.'

V.—THE SHIRES OF CAMBRIDGE AND HUNTINGDON.

THESE two counties fit into one another so closely, and are so much alike, that one description will serve for both. The northern half of each county belongs to the Fens; even beyond the Fens, the fields are, for the most part, very flat. Both counties have hills in the south; those of Cambridge are called the Gog Magog Hills. Green pastures and meadows, with water-ways running through them, are to be seen everywhere. These are *Dairy* counties, that is, cows are kept from whose milk butter and cheese are made. The butter of Cambridge is sold in an odd way; you ask, not for half a pound, but for half a yard, or for two yards. Stilton, in Huntingdon, gives its name to a famous kind of cheese, of which gentlemen are fond. A good deal of corn is grown in Hunts, and

Cambridge has large orchards scattered over the shire.

'Water, water, everywhere, and not a drop to drink,'

might be the complaint of the people of these two fen counties, for although they have the Nen, and the Great Ouse, with its tributary Cam, and an endless number of rivers, leams, and droves, cut to drain the low lands, it is really difficult to get good drinking water.

There are not many important towns in either county; Ramsey, where are still ruins of the old abbey, St. Ives, St. Neots, and the county town are the chief places in the little shire of Huntingdon. The town of Huntingdon has the honour of being the birth-place of Oliver Cromwell, the great general who fought against Charles I. in the Civil War; indeed, this long war ended as it did entirely through his wisdom and skill. It is a strange thing that Cromwell was so weary of the way in which matters were going on in England, that he was about to depart to America to make himself a home where there was no king to deal unjustly by his subjects. Had he gone, the battles of Marston Moor and Naseby might never have been fought, and King Charles might never have been beheaded; but while he was actually in the ship, at the mouth of the Thames, ready to sail next morning, the king sent messengers to fetch him and his friends back, and would not allow them to leave England.

The towns of Cambridge are, the cathedral city of

Ely, March, Chatteris, Wisbeach, a port, Whittlesea, Newmarket, where most of the people are busy about the horse-races which take place there seven times a-year; but the one really famous place is Cambridge, which is known all over the world for—

VI.—THE UNIVERSITY.

The town of Cambridge stands on level ground, by the side of the river which forms part of its name; the stately college-buildings rising from among groups of splendid trees, distinguish the beautiful town.

Englishmen look upon these buildings with reverent eyes, not for the sake of their beauty, but for that of the great men—men whose names are the glory of England—who have been educated within their walls.

History does not tell when Cambridge first became a University, where all learning was studied, all students welcome.

In early days, the students of Cambridge lived in much discomfort,—scattered through the town in miserable lodgings, or gathered together in 'hostels,' or 'inns,' where many lived under a Principal of their own; but the people of the town charged such high rents for these poor places, they nearly drove the scholars away altogether.

This state of things led rich men and women who cared about learning, to build colleges from time to time, where the students might live and study in

comfort, as well as to give land or money to keep up these new colleges.

St. Peter's College, or Peterhouse, was the first of these, which, with a church and a library of precious books, was the gift of one Hugh de Balsham.

There are now, in all, seventeen colleges in the University: of these, King's, founded by the 'Royal Saint,' Henry VI., which has the most beautiful Chapel in the world, with,—

> 'High embowered roof,
> With antique pillars massy proof,
> And storied windows richly dight,
> Casting a dim religious light:'—

Trinity, with its noble Hall, and library of precious books, and its pleasant walks by Cam, with St. John's, and Jesus College, on the banks of the Cam, are among the most notable.

In this great University, or in that of Oxford, many English gentlemen get the education which makes them wise and gentle, simple and brave, and, altogether, the finest gentlemen in the world,—at least so English people think.

SUFFOLK.

I.

SUFFOLK is another low, flat, eastern county: a county without any hills to speak of. The middle of the shire is well covered with large farms, where four sorts of corn are grown, as well as peas and beans, and green crops; where there are pastures, too, for the cows, from whose milk capital butter is made; and where Suffolk horses are reared, and the famous Suffolk pigs are raised, and such turkeys and geese for the Christmas dinners of folk in large towns! Most of the towns are market-towns, where the good things raised in this farming county are sold. There is Bury St. Edmunds, the chief town in West Suffolk, a large town, that owes its name to a story, which you shall hear; where there are the ruins of a splendid old abbey, and where twelve people were burnt at the stake because they loved their religion too well to give it up at the command of Queen Mary. Another tale of a Suffolk martyr belongs to Hadleigh, also a market-town, as are Eye, where lace is made, and Stowmarket, where gun-cotton is made, and

Halesworth and Framlingham, which has an old castle.

Ipswich, the county town, is a market-town, too; it is also a port; it stands at the end of the estuary of the river Orwell, and ships come up to the town, though it is eleven miles from the sea. The Orwell estuary joins that of the Stour, the river which divides Suffolk from Essex. There are large iron-works at Ipswich, in which ploughs and harrows and other implements used in farming are made.

Along these low river-mouths are marshes, and high banks have been raised to keep the river waters in; in the north-west corner, too, between Cambridge and Norfolk, is part of the fen country, where there are marshes and peat fens, and stretches of open heath, upon which sheep find a living. There is another marshy corner in the north-east, east of Waveney River, where 'green grow the rushes, O,' upon 'broads' like those of Norfolk.

Heather wastes, with sheep feeding on them, and marshes, with cattle dotted about in the deep green pastures, and low sands running far inland—these are the kinds of land to be found lying along the low coast of Suffolk, which seems to be sinking by degrees into the sea.

Indeed, at many points of the coast, where the sea is now deep enough at low water to carry the largest ships, harvests were reaped and villages were standing not so very long ago. Dunwich is now a little village with no more than twenty houses; it stands on rather high ground, and all about it is waste

and desolate. A thousand years ago Dunwich was a rich and great city, with a bishop and twelve churches, and there was a large wood between it and the shore. But the sea made its way in and carried off Dunwich city bit by bit : a monastery, churches, 400 houses at once, in the reign of Edward III., shops and windmills, chapels and gates ; first went the bells of St. Peter's church, and then the walls tumbled over as the waves undermined them. The waters reached the churchyard of St. Francis, and the coffins might be seen in the cliffs. At last poor Dunwich was left with only a few houses and *half a church.* The people fled from the sea, and made their homes in the present village of Dunwich, which they thought was far enough inland to be safe, and there is not one house of the old city left.

Lowestoft, close by which is the Ness, the most eastern point in England, and Southwold, Felixstow, and Aldborough, are pleasant bathing-places on this east coast. They are fishing-towns, too, and help in the great Yarmouth herring-fishery, besides catching soles, mackerel, and cod-fish ; and they are seaports. The sea is driving Aldborough back from its shores ; the parish church of long ago is now under deep sea.

II.—THE MARTYR OF BURY ST. EDMUNDS.

How came the Danes to England in the first place? This is how the story goes, though we cannot be sure that it is true *history.*

Lodbrog, king of Denmark, was very fond of

hawking; one day his pet falcon fell into the sea, and the king leaped into a boat that he might save it. But a storm rose, and the king could not get back to his home, but was driven across the sea in his little boat, and at last thrown on the Suffolk coast, close by Yarmouth.

In those days the north folk (Norfolk) and the south folk (Suffolk) made up the Saxon kingdom of East Anglia, and this kingdom was under the rule of the brave and pious King Edmund.

The stranger king was brought to King Edmund, who treated him with honour and kindness, and took him out hunting every day. Great was his skill both in hunting and hawking; never was bird or beast too swift, or strong, or cunning for him; and King Edmund, who held such sports dear, liked his stranger guest well. Now the king had a huntsman named Berne, who grew jealous of Lodbrog, and, on a day when they were hunting together, he slew the Dane, and buried his body in the forest. But Lodbrog had a little dog which loved him. The other hounds went home after the hunt, but this dog watched over his dead master. When Edmund and his people were gathered in the great hall to meat, Lodbrog's dog came and fawned upon the king: this thing happened night after night, and the king wondered greatly where the dog's master was. At last they tracked the dog to the spot where the dead body lay. The wicked deed of Berne came to be known: the king drove him out of his land, and set him adrift on the wide sea in the boat which had been Lodbrog's.

Now for the ill-hap of England it came to pass that this boat was driven to the shores of Denmark, and Berne was brought before the sons of Lodbrog, and made to tell what had become of their father; but he feared to tell of his own guilt, and said that Edmund, king of the East Angles, had put him to death.

So Hubba and Hungnar got ships and men, and their twin-sisters wove them a standard with a raven upon it: a dark standard which afterwards waved over many a bloody battle-field; and they came, the first of a long stream of Danes—kings, and jarls, and fighting men, which for three hundred years poured down upon the shores of unhappy England.

At Hoxne, on the banks of the Waveney, the Danish brothers met King Edmund. The Danes numbered more than the Saxons; and the king 'fought fiercely and manfully against the army. But because the merciful God foreknew that he was to arrive at the crown of martyrdom, he there fell gloriously.' He was made captive, and fettered, and cruelly beaten. Then the Danes said he should live if he would give up his faith in Christ. But the king would not have life as the price of dishonour to his Lord. So they bound him to a tree, and shot at him with arrows until he died; and then the Danish brothers struck off his head, and threw it into a thicket.

His friends went in search of the martyr-king, and 'they went seeking all together, and constantly calling, as is the wont of those who go oft into the woods, "Where art thou, comrade?" and to them answered

the head, "Here, here, here!" They all were answered as often as any of them called until they all came to the wood calling to it. There lay the grey wolf that guarded the head, and with his two feet had the head embraced, greedy and hungry, and for God durst not taste the head. Then they were astonished at the wolf's guardianship, and carried the holy head with them, thanking the Almighty for all His wonders. But the wolf followed forth with the head until they came to the town, as if he were tame, and after that turned into the woods again.'

The body of the martyr was carried to a town called Badrichesworth and there buried; wherefore this town came to be called *Bury* St. Edmunds. Many pilgrims came to the spot where the martyr-king lay; and many years after, King Canute, himself a Dane, raised a great abbey there—one of the most splendid in the land. All the land about belonged to the abbey, and the dwellers thereon gave service to the abbot. Not only here, but in all the country-side, the cruel death of St. Edmund was kept in mind, and pictures might be seen in many church windows of how he was bound to a tree, and shot to death with arrows.

III.—THE MARTYR OF HADLEIGH.

In the early days of the Reformation, Hadleigh had a good and gentle vicar, named Rowland Taylor. Dr. Taylor was a father to his people of Hadleigh; he took loving heed of their wants, and taught them

the truth as he found it in the Bible; and he would not allow in the parish church the services of the Church of Rome, which he thought were against the teaching of the Bible, and kept men from learning the truth about God.

Now Queen Mary was not only a zealous Roman Catholic herself, but she meant that all the people of England should be subject to the Pope; and if there were no other way she was ready to burn out the *Reformation*, which had begun under her father, Henry VIII. Then began a time of terrible persecution.

Good Dr. Taylor was one of the first to suffer: Bishop Gardiner, who did the queen's pleasure, sent for him to London. His friends begged him to fly, but he said, 'Oh, what will ye have me to do? I am old, and have already lived too long to see these terrible and most wicked days. I am fully determined to go to the Bishop, and to his beard to tell him that he doth naught.'

So, leaving his weeping people, he went to London, and there for two years he was held in the King's Bench Prison. They tried to break his heart with hard usage; and four different times did his judges offer him life and honour if he would do the queen's pleasure, and submit to the Pope. But they could not move the good old man. So at two o'clock on one February morning the sheriff came to fetch him out of prison and carry him once more to Hadleigh, his dear home, which was to be the place of his martyrdom.

It was very dark, and they led him without lights

to an inn near Aldgate. 'His wife, suspecting that her husband should that night be carried away, watched all night in St. Botolph's Church porch, beside Aldgate, having with her two children, the one named Elizabeth, of thirteen years of age, whom being left without father or mother, Dr. Taylor had brought up of alms from three years old; the other named Mary, Dr. Taylor's own daughter.

'Now when the sheriff and his company came against St. Botolph's Church, Elizabeth cried, saying, "O my dear father! mother, mother, here is my father led away!" Then cried his wife, "Rowland, Roland! where art thou?" for it was a very dark morning that the one could not see the other.

'Dr. Taylor answered, "Dear wife, I am here," and stayed. Then came she to him, and he took his daughter Mary in his arms; and he, and his wife, and Elizabeth, kneeled down and said the Lord's Prayer. At which sight the sheriff wept apace, and so did divers others of the company. After they had prayed, he rose up, and kissed his wife, and shook her by the hand, and said, "Farewell, my dear wife! be of good comfort, for I am quiet in conscience: God shall stir up a father for my children." And then he kissed his daughter Mary, and said, "God bless thee, and make thee his servant." And kissing Elizabeth, he said, "God bless thee! I pray you all stand strong and steadfast unto Christ and His word, and keep you from idolatry." Then said his wife, "God be with thee, dear Rowland! I will, with God's grace, meet thee at Hadleigh."

'All the way Dr. Taylor was merry and cheerful as one that accounted himself going to a most pleasant banquet or bridal.

'Coming within two miles of Hadleigh, "Why, Master Doctor," quoth the sheriff, "how do you now?" He answered, "Well, God be praised, Master Sheriff, never better, for now I am almost at home: I lack not past two stiles to go over, and I am even at my Father's house!"

'The streets of Hadleigh were beset on both sides with men and women of the town and country, who waited to see him; whom when they saw him so led to death, with weeping eyes and lamentable voices, they cried, "Ah, good Lord! there goeth our good shepherd from us, that so faithfully hath taught us, so fatherly hath cared for us, and so godly hath governed us! Oh, merciful God, strengthen him and comfort him!" The journey was at last over. When the people saw his reverend and ancient face, with a long white beard, they burst out with weeping tears and cried, saying, "God save thee, good Dr. Taylor! the Holy Ghost comfort thee!"

'Then he stripped off his clothes unto his shirt, and gave them to the poor; and he said with a loud voice, "Good people, I have taught you nothing but God's Holy Word, and those lessons that I have taken out of God's blessed book, the Holy Bible; and I am come hither this day to seal it with my blood."

'When he had prayed he went to the stake, and kissed it, and set himself into a pitch-barrel which they had set for him to stand on; and so he stood

with his back upright against the stake, with his hands folded together, and his eyes towards heaven, and so let himself be burned. One cruelly cast a fagot at him which hit him upon his head, and brake his face that the blood ran down his visage. Then said Dr. Taylor, "Oh, friend, I have harm enough! what needed that?" So stood he still, without either crying or moving, with his hands folded together, till one struck him on the head, and the dead corpse fell down into the fire.'

BERKSHIRE.

I.—THE VALE OF WHITE HORSE.

*'MOST of you have probably travelled down the Great Western Railway as far as Swindon. Those of you who did so with their eyes open have been aware, soon after leaving the Didcot Station, of a fine range of chalk hills running parallel with the railway on the left hand side as you go down, and distant some two or three miles, more or less, from the line. The highest point in the range is the White Horse Hill, which you come in front of just before you stop at the Shrivenham Station. The Great Western now runs right through it; and White Horse Vale is a land of large, rich pastures, bounded by ox-fences, and covered with fine hedge-row timber. The villages are straggling, queer, old-fashioned places, the houses being dropped down, without the least regularity, in nooks and out-of-the-way corners, by the sides of shadowy lanes and footpaths, each with its patch of garden.

'I pity people who weren't born in a vale. I don't

* *Tom Brown's School Days.*

mean a flat country, but a vale,—that is, a flat country bounded by hills. The having your hill *always* in view if you choose to turn towards him,—that's the essence of a vale.

'And, then, what a hill is the White Horse Hill! There it stands, right up above all the rest, nine hundred feet above the sea, and the boldest, bravest shape for a chalk-hill that you ever saw. Let us go up to the top of him, and see what is to be found there. Ay, you may well wonder and think it odd you never heard of this before! Yes, it's a magnificent Roman camp, and no mistake, with gates, and ditch, and mounds,—all as complete as it was twenty years after the strong old rogues left it. The ground falls away rapidly on all sides. Was there ever such turf in the whole world? You sink up to your ankles at every step, yet the spring of it is delicious.

'There is always a breeze in the "camp," as it is called; and here it lies just as the Romans left it. It is altogether a place that you won't forget,—a place to open a man's soul as he looks down on that great vale spread out as the garden of the Lord before him, and wave on wave of the mysterious downs behind; and to the right and left, the chalk-hills running away into the distance, along which he can trace for miles the old Roman road, the Ridgeway ("the Rudge," as the country folk call it), keeping straight along the highest back of the hills.

'And now we leave the camp, and descend towards the west, and are on the Ash-down. We are treading on heroes. It is sacred ground for Englishmen,—

more sacred than all but one or two fields where their bones lie whitening. For this is the actual place where our Alfred won his great battle, the battle of Ash-down, which broke the Danish power, and made England a Christian land.

'The Danes held the camp and the slope where we are standing,—the whole crown of the hill in fact. "The heathen had beforehand seized the higher ground," as old Asser says, having wasted everything behind them from London, and being just ready to burst down on the fair vale, Alfred's own birthplace and heritage. And up the heights came the Saxons, as they did at the Alma. The Christians led up their line from the lower ground. There stood, also, on that same spot, a single thorn-tree, marvellous stumpy, around which, as I was saying, the two lines of foemen came togther in battle with a huge shout. And in this place, one of the two kings of the heathen and five of his earls fell down and died, and many thousands of the heathen died in the same place.

'After which crowning mercy, the pious king, that there might never be wanting a sign and a memorial to the country-side, carved out on the northern side of the chalk-hill, under the camp, where it is very steep, the great Saxon White Horse, which he who will may see from the railway, and which gives its name to the vale, over which it has looked these thousand years and more.

'This famous figure of the White Horse, 374 feet long, is apt to get out of order in bad weather; the ends of the legs become filled up with earth brought

down by the rain, so that sometimes the tail looks longer than the legs. Not for long though,—once a-year there is a grand "Scouring of the White Horse," when the Vale folk come with pick, and shovel, and broom, and cut away the turf until the Horse shows out white and perfect in shape. This is the great yearly feast of the Vale, when everybody keeps holiday.

'Right down below the White Horse, is a curious deep and broad gully, called "the Manger," into one side of which the hills fall with a series of the most lovely, sweeping curves, known as "the Giant's Stairs." They are not a bit like stairs, but I never saw anything like them anywhere else,—with their short, green turf, and tender blue-bells, and gossamer, and thistle-down gleaming in the sun, and the sheep-paths running along their sides like ruled lines.

'Passing along the Ridgeway to the east, we soon come to cultivated land. The Downs, strictly so called, are no more. Lincolnshire farmers have been imported, and the long, fresh slopes are sheep-walks no more, but grow famous turnips and barley.'

It would take too long to describe, or tell the stories belonging to half the places in the Vale, which is shut in between two ranges of downs out of Wiltshire—the Downs with White Horse Hill, which run across the middle of the county, and another range which keeps within a mile or so of Thames, on the north. There is Abingdon, with no sign left of its splendid abbey; and Wallingford, with only ruined walls to show where its famous

castle stood; and Farringdon, which held out so stoutly for Charles I.; and Wantage, with its cherry-fair, where the great Alfred was born. Tales of old times belong to all four, and they are all now pleasant market-towns, to which the good things grown in the Vale are brought for sale.

II.—EAST BERKSHIRE.

'Not only White Horse Vale—watered by its little river Ock—the whole county is full of goodly farms and pretty villages; broad pastures for the cattle, smooth hills for the sheep, green meadows, and corn-fields, and copses, and all things pleasant to look upon; for it lies within the pleasant valley of the Thames, which goes in and out in endless curves along the north of the county, dividing it from Oxford.

Another beautiful and fertile valley is that of 'Kennet, swift, for silver eels renowned.' A valley famous for its wheat, and at the bottom of which are beautiful bright green water-meadows, for the Kennet divides in places into two or three streams, and between these are the meadows.

On a wooded hill, at the base of which runs the Kennet, are the ruins of Donnington Castle, once a very strong fort, which was held for King Charles with wonderful courage and success. Within a mile of the castle ruins is the market-town of Newbury, close by which two battles, in two following years, were fought during the Civil War, with such even

courage on both sides, that neither gained the victory. In the first battle, the king's side suffered a grievous loss. Lord Falkland, the most gentle and learned of all his friends, was among the slain. On the morning of the battle, he had said, 'I am weary of the times, and foresee much misery to my country; but believe that I shall be out of it ere night.' 'Peace, peace,' were his last words. Before the war, he had been full of cheerfulness and playful wit; but he loved the king, and he loved his country, and he thought the war altogether wrong and evil, though it still seemed to him a duty to fight for the king. So in these troubled times he went about with a heavy heart and a sad countenance; and often, among his friends, after a deep silence and many sighs, he would, with a sad accent, say the word, 'Peace.' Upon Newbury field he found the peace for which he wearied.

Reading, the county-town, is in a beautiful spot, just where the Kennet joins the Thames. It is an old, old town, which has seen many changes. The Saxons have fought in it, the Danes have burned it, kings have dwelt in it in royal state, parliaments have been held there; but the chief glory of Reading was its great abbey, rich and splendid beyond any, except that of Glastonbury. In these days, Reading is chiefly noted for Huntley and Palmer's delicious biscuits.

III.—WINDSOR CASTLE.

The chief glory of Berkshire is Windsor Castle, one of the homes of our beloved Queen; and a very stately and beautiful home it is. It is both a castle and a palace; the palace part is built on each side of a square, and has the State apartments, and the Queen's private apartments, and the visitors' apartments; and in the last two alone there are more rooms than there are days in the year. Splendid as the State apartments are, the castle is the most interesting part: a royal castle from Saxon days, it is to Edward III. Windsor owes its glory. In his wars he made two kings his prisoners—David of Scotland and John of France—and with the money paid for the ransom of these captive kings, he built two of the castle towers, and his architect was none other than William of Wykeham, the famous bishop of Winchester. One of these is the Round Tower, or Keep, which stands upon a mound, and was built by the king to hold a round table for his knights, like the famous round table of King Arthur. The interior is reached by a covered flight of one hundred steps; and a second flight leads to the battlements of the proud keep, from which twelve counties may be seen. To this keep belong many of the stories of Windsor Castle, for since Edward's reign it has been used as the castle prison.

The first great captive of the keep was the poet-king of Scotland, James I. Scotland was, for the most part, on very friendly terms with France in the bygone days; and as France was a gay and courtly land, the young nobles and princes of Scotland were sometimes sent there to be educated. King Robert of Scotland put his son James, a boy about nine years of age, on board ship, to send him thither, not only that he might be taught, but to keep him safe from a fierce uncle, who would harm the boy.

But it befell that the ship was taken by the English, and the prince was carried to London; and though there was peace between the two countries, the English king, Henry IV., would not restore him to liberty, which broke his poor father's heart, and he died soon after, worn out with this, in addition to many other troubles.

For nineteen years was the young prince a captive, for the most part, in the keep of Windsor. But never a prisoner bore lighter fetters; the king had him trained in all knightly exercises, and taught all learning that befitted a prince; the king's own noble sons were his companions, and he and they grew up together like brothers. The young prince had another pleasure—he was a poet; no verses so sweet as his had been written in those days by any poet, excepting only Chaucer himself. One more happiness was his: the tower wherein he was confined, he tells us, looked 'over a garden faire,' and he—

'Bewailing in my chamber, thus alone,
Despairèd of all joy and remedy,
For-tired of my thought, and woe-begone,
And to the window 'gan I walk in hy (haste)
To see the world and folk that went forbye.'

He sees many things—a 'garden faire,' and a green arbour, all set thick with boughs and leaves, and on the small green twigs sat the little sweet nightingale, and sung so loud and clear, and then—

'Cast I down mine eyes again,
Where as I saw, walking under the tower,
The fairest or the freshest youngè flower
That ever I saw, methought, before that hour,'
'Her fair fresh face, as white as any snaw.'

This was a young English princess, the Lady Jane Beaufort, whom he dearly loved, and in whose praise he wrote a long poem. She was afterwards married to the young king, and went with him to his Scottish home.

The next great captive in the tower was, strange to say, the next poet who wrote such sweet true verses that we care for them still. He was Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey, a brave soldier, as well as poet, and a most courtly knight; but he angered Henry VIII. in the days when the king had grown old, and fierce as a savage to any who offended him. So he was shut up in the keep at Windsor, knowing that the king would shortly behead him. His thoughts were sorrowful enough, the more so when he remembered other days, for this was not the first

time he had dwelt at Windsor. He had been brought up here, a happy boy, in company with another lad of royal blood, who was his dear friend; and now, when he is a heavy-hearted captive, all his thoughts go back to those joyous days, and he writes,—

'So cruel prison how could betide, alas!
As proud Windsor? Where I, in lust and joy
With a king's son my childish years did pass,
In greater feast than Priam's son of Troy.'

And then he recalls all the pleasant haunts of early days, 'each sweet place,' 'the stately seats,' 'the mead,' 'the secret groves,' 'the wild forest,' 'the cry of hounds,' and all the joys of merry beautiful Windsor; chief of all—

'The wide vales, eke, that harboured us each night,
Wherewith, alas! reviveth in my breast,
The sweet accord, such sleeps as yet delight,
The pleasant dreams, the quiet bed of rest:

'The secret thoughts imparted with such trust,
The wanton talk, the divers change of play,
The friendship sworn, each promise kept so just;
Wherewith we passed the winter night away.

'And with this thought, the blood forsakes the face,
The tears be-rain my cheeks of deadly hue,
The which, as soon as sobbing sighs, alas!
Upsuppèd have, thus I my plaint renew:

'O place of bliss! renewer of my woes,
Give me accounts, where is my noble frere (companion)?'

He was not long to miss his friend; the king had the gentle poet beheaded, to the great sorrow of the nation.

The stately towers of Windsor look out upon the Thames on the north; and to the south there is, first, the Great Park—a part of the forest, with its noble trees, and beyond that still the great Forest of Windsor. To reach the forest from the castle, we must go through the Long Walk, which is three miles long, and quite straight, and runs from the castle-gate to the top of Snow Hill—such a Walk, with its double row of great elms on each side, as is hardly to be seen anywhere else.

Then there is St. George's Chapel, with its painted windows, and the Tomb-house, which the Queen has had made very beautiful in memory of her dear husband, Prince Albert—'Albert the Good.' And there is the forest itself, with its oaks and beeches; and the model farms, where all the best plans are followed; and the huge statue of George III. at the end of the Long Walk; and within the palace more beautiful and curious things — pictures and carvings, and grand furnishing—than we have room to describe.

SURREY.

I.

'THE Surrey side' does not mean the pleasantest part of London by any means. Of course, the Surrey side of Thames is meant, and a very crowded, busy, and poor part of great London town is that bit of Surrey which lies for the most part within the north bend of the river, that is, the *boroughs* of Southwark and Lambeth. This huge London has a way of stretching out towards the villages and towns around it, and, by degrees, taking them into itself. Thus, Lambeth, and Southwark, and various other places, are now altogether in London, and have nothing but their names to show they were once villages at some distance from the great city.

It is rather disappointing to enter London for the first time by the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway. Long before you get to London Bridge, somebody says, 'You are in London now,' and you look out, and see nothing but rows and rows of mean-looking houses with red-tiled roofs. By-and-by you are busy spelling out the names on the factories, and

you find out where matches, and blacking, and wire-blinds, and a hundred other things, are made. You learn, too, how the people who live in that great forest of red-topped houses get their livings.

Both Southwark and Lambeth lie along the bank of Thames; Lambeth on the side furthest from Kent. Lambeth, which was once just a country village, includes other places, villages once, which, like it, have become part of the great town—Brixton, Stockwell, and others. Some of these are open and pleasant places to live in for people whose business is in the City, and who go to and fro every day by omnibus or rail.

The glory of Lambeth is the palace, a grand old building on the bank of Thames, which has belonged to the primates of England for about seven hundred years, and where more English history has taken place than we have room to write about. The finest-looking building on this south side of Thames is St. Thomas's Hospital, a new hospital, imposing from without, and large, clean, and airy within, where everything is arranged in the most perfect way for the comfort and health of the sick.

St. Thomas's is in Lambeth; and Southwark, too, has its great hospitals—Guy's Hospital and Bethlehem, or Bedlam, as it is called, the hospital for mad people.

South of Lambeth, and beyond the endless market-gardens where green vegetables for London are raised, we come to a pretty country, with high, breezy commons here and there, and clumps of trees, and

among the trees the handsome houses of rich London merchants. Streatham, with its pleasant village at the foot of the furzy common, and the houses of the gentlefolk buried among trees all round, is one of the prettiest of these places. Hither Dr. Johnson loved to come out of dusty London to drink tea with his friend, Mrs. Thrale, whose pleasant house has only lately been thrown down.

Then there is Norwood, Upper and Lower, with roads bordered with villas hidden among trees. Better than all, there is the Crystal Palace, a great palace all built of glass, as if it had come out of a fairy tale ; and, what with fireworks and fountains, and painted savages lurking about in strange places, and music, and pictures, and every kind of delightful show you can think of, it is indeed a fairy palace, and we are rather sorry for the boys and girls who have never been there. Part of it was built in the first place for the Great Exhibition, to which the best works of all nations were sent for show, and people of all nations crowded to see them. There have been a good many exhibitions since, in our own country, and in America, in Paris, and in other places, but none of them has been equal to the first *great* Exhibition in 1851, which was the thought of the beloved Prince Consort, 'Albert the Good,' whose wise heart was full of plans for making England a greater and better nation. That was a sorrowful Sunday morning when we knew that our dear Queen was a widow. We were very sad for her, and we all felt as if we ourselves had lost a dear and honoured friend.

These *suburbs* of London, the half-country places about the town, reach south as far as Croydon, by the Downs, which is a rather busy, crowded town, the largest in Surrey after the London boroughs. Near it is Addington, where the Archbishops of Canterbury usually live.

II.—THE DOWNS.

The Downs, the North Downs, enter Surrey from Hants, by the old town of Farnham. First comes a long, straight, narrow ridge, called, because it is so straight, the Hog's Back ; then there is a break in the hills, wide enough for the chalky Wey to pass through on its way to join the Thames at *Wey*bridge. In this opening in the hills lies the pleasant old town of Guildford, with its ruined castle, the county-town of Surrey. East of Guildford, quite close to the town, the line of Downs begins again, spreading wider and wider towards the north. When the hills reach Dorking, they part again to make way for the little Mole, on its way to join Father Thames. Dorking, all among hills and trees, lies in the prettiest part of the Down country, and, on the other side of the river, the Downs begin again with Box Hill, a delightful hill, covered with groves of dark-green boxwood, from which the winding Mole, and Dorking, and many a pleasant village, may be seen. The London holiday-keepers know it well. From Box Hill the line of Downs still goes east until it gets within the Kent border. A line it can hardly be called now, for the rolling Downs spread to a width of eight or

ten miles, past Epsom, with its breezy downs, where horse-races are held, even as far north as Croydon. Very pretty this part of Surrey is ; there are trees in the dips, and the hills are mostly well covered with trees, from among which peep out the handsome houses of the rich people of London. There is hardly a prettier bit of railway-line in England than that between Leatherhead and Dorking.

The chalk Downs are not the only hills in Surrey. South of these is a long line of high commons, sometimes rising into hills, like Leith Hill, south-west of Dorking, the highest in the county. These commons are mostly bare and dreary enough, broad wastes, covered with furze and heath. Godalming, where is the Charterhouse School, is the chief town in this part of the county. Below the commons begins the pleasant woody Sussex Weald, which lies between the North Downs and the South Downs of Sussex.

III.—THE SURREY BANK.

We can only speak of a few of the interesting places on the Surrey bank of Thames. Going up the river, there is Kew, with its delightful Botanical Gardens, where, among many other wonders of foreign lands, is a great house of palms, the real palms of the tropics, which are kept comfortably warm in a high glass house, far too hot for our comfort. Then there is Richmond, at the foot of, and stretching up the slope of Richmond Hill, and upon the hill is a terrace from which you look down upon the Thames, as—

'Soft and slow
It wanders through the vale below.'

There is a park upon the hill, and the 'Star and Garter' Hotel, where the witty, and wise, and great people of London have long been in the habit of coming to dine, and to be refreshed by the pleasant view.

Altogether, Richmond is a pretty and pleasant town, though not, as once it was, the home of kings. The front of the old palace, with its towers and pear-shaped turrets may still be seen from the Thames,—the palace in which the great Queen Elizabeth died, after lying for two days 'in a manner speechless, very pensive and silent.' On Richmond Green is still the gateway to the Wardrobe Court of the old palace, an important court to a queen who owned so many gowns. Sheen was the old name of the town; it was called Richmond by Henry VII., Henry of Richmond, the first of our Tudor kings, who was Earl of Richmond, in Yorkshire.

Higher up the river is the true king's town, *Kingston*, where, standing in an open space, railed in, is a famous stone upon which seven of the Saxon kings were crowned, for it was a royal town in Saxon days. A quaint and pleasant old town it is still, with in-and-out streets, and queer corners, and houses meeting over narrow alleys. The old town still keeps its place by the bank of Thames, but there is a new Kingston springing up behind it.

One other place we must speak of. On Thames

bank, close by the Berkshire border, there is to this day a marshy flat called Runny*mead* (or meadow). In the days of King John here lay the great barons of England, and, on the opposite bank of the river, the king and his people were encamped. And king and barons met on an island in the river, which thus lay between the two camps, to discuss the Great Charter. On this spot the barons compelled the king to sign that Charter which has done so much to make the English a free and great nation.

THE NORTH BANK OF THAMES.

OXFORD, BUCKINGHAM, MIDDLESEX, ESSEX.

I.

THE Thames washes the southern border of these four counties: they all have low hills and spreading vales; but whatever there may be of hill and dale, the general slope of the land is towards the river, bordered by flowery meads and shady trees.

'In the upper and middle parts of Thames are many little islands, called *eyots*, single or in clusters. Not many of them are of any great size, and only two or three have dwellings upon them; but many have toy-houses, temple, grotto, or summer-house, according to the taste of the owner. Some of them are planted with groups of good-sized trees, such as ash, alder and willow, and others that will thrive in damp soils. The smaller eyots, "withy aits," as the people about call them, are generally planted with osiers. As these eyots occur in the shallows, they are often surrounded by beds of rushes; while the

willow-herb, and the tall loose-strife, and other flowers that love such places, grow in marvellous profusion about them—a belt of brilliant colours. These islands are the homes of the water-hen and the swan, both Thames birds.'

Leaving Gloucester at Lechlade, where the Leach joins it, the river takes its course through a most pleasant green vale between Berkshire on the south, and Oxon and Bucks on the north. The Windrush joins it a few miles lower than the Leach. Oxford, with its stately halls and colleges, the city of palaces, stands in wide, tree-shaded meadows, where the Cherwell joins the Thames, here called the Isis.

The 'fruitful Thame,' whose course is partly through the fertile vale of Aylesbury, joins the Thames at a point, near to which was fought the battle of Chalgrove Field. It was hardly a battle, only a skirmish of the Civil War; but a man fell here whose death was a sorrow to the whole English nation, even to the king against whom he was fighting—the noble patriot, John Hampden. He was struck in the shoulder by two bullets, which passed into his body. The troops of the Parliament gave way, and Hampden, with his head drooping, and his hands leaning on his horse's neck, moved feebly out of the battle. He made for Thame, on the little river of that name, leaped the brook, and arrived almost fainting with agony. There was no hope. He suffered extreme pain, but bore it with much patience. His first care was for his country; and from his bed he wrote several letters about

public affairs. Then he quietly prepared to die. He received the Sacrament, and then lay murmuring faint prayers for himself and for the cause in which he died. 'Lord Jesus,' he cried, at the last moment, 'receive my soul. O Lord, save my country. O Lord, be merciful to ——;' but the prayer was left unfinished; his great spirit had passed away.

'The loss of Colonel Hampden goeth near the heart of every man that loves the good of his king and country.'

II.

Perhaps the prettiest part of the Thames Valley is where the river makes a bend to wind round the southern end of the Chiltern Hills. These hills, part of a long chalk range, run in a north-easterly direction through Bucks and Beds; sometimes in a waving line; sometimes clothed with thick woods of beech; now swelling into wide and open downs; and now, showing their white chalk sides amidst the dark foliage of the beech-trees. Oxfordshire is still famous for its beech-woods, though much land is now farmed, which, not very long ago, was forest. Among the beeches, at the foot of the Chilterns, upon the bank of Thames, nestles the pretty town of Henley.

Leaving Henley, the river skirts Buckinghamshire, another county of beeches, which is said to have got its name from the Saxon, *buccem*, a beech-tree. Through deep, shady meadows, with here and there a border of forget-me-nots; past Great Marlow, where

pins and paper are made, close by the foot of Woburn Hill, it flows,—

> 'Though deep, yet clear; though gentle, yet not dull;
> Strong, without rage; without o'erflowing, full.'

The beauty of the river becomes more striking as it continues its course through the trees of Windsor Forest, with the stately Castle crowning the hill on the Berkshire side, and the buildings, stately also, of Eton College rising from among trees on the other. It is an old college, founded by Henry VI. for the education of twenty-five 'poor and indigent boys.' Some seventy 'king's scholars' are still taught at Eton; but besides these, there are from 900 to 1000 other scholars, the sons of the most noble and wealthy persons in the country. Round the College buildings are large gardens and playing fields.

'Unmuddled by commerce, but flowing free and pure, amid the greenest meadows, scattered villas, and trees over-hanging its clear waters, and adding to its glad aspects the richness of their beauty,' the Thames continues its course. The Colne joins the great river at Staines; it divides Bucks from Middlesex, and sends its waters to the Thames by four or five channels. The chief beauties of the river are on the Surrey side now, but Middlesex has the grand front of Hampton Court Palace, and Bushy Park, and Twickenham, where the poet, Pope, lived.

'Bushy is laid out with a fine sheet of water, and with splendid rows of horse-chestnut trees on each side of the public road which runs through it to

Teddington and Twickenham. It is a very pleasant drive through this park; especially when the chestnuts are in full blossom. The beauty of these trees is great; their fine massy piles of foliage, their wide and low-sweeping boughs, and the length of the avenues—being no less than nine of them, running parallel for upwards of a mile.

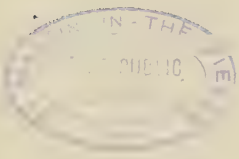
'The wide centre avenue is used as the public road, and the gates at each end stand open every day, so that you are surprised that the deer do not all run out. But the herd will come up close to the roadside as a coach is driving past, and graze within a few yards of it without the slightest notice of it.' *

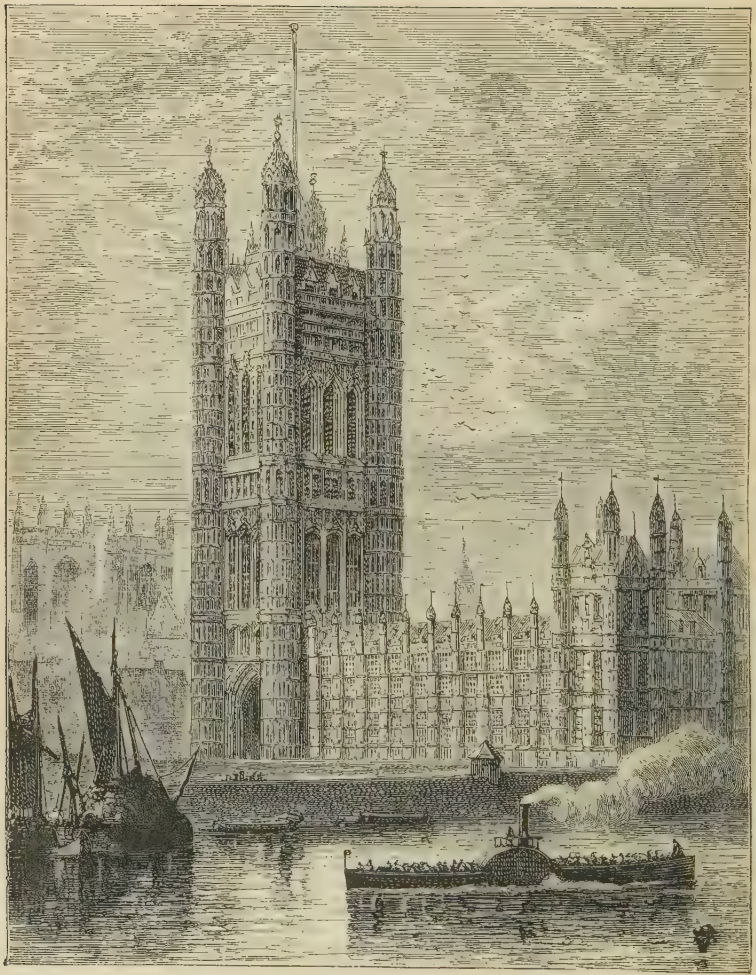
'A visit to Hampton Court is one of the bravest pleasures that a happy party of friends can promise themselves.' We do not see this stately palace, which outshined all the king's houses, at its best; for much of Hampton Court, as it was built by the proud Cardinal, has been pulled down and replaced by less stately buildings. Only here had Wolsey full room for the thousand persons—servants and gentlemen attendants—who waited upon him. Here he kept great state, and entertained king and court with music and feasting, shows, and all other delights. When he rode forth to visit the king, he was attended by a noble train of knights and gentlemen. In crimson and gold was he arrayed, and he carried an orange in his hand, emptied of its fruit, and with aromatic vinegar in a sponge for its contents, in case unpleasant smells should greet his lordly nostrils.

* Wm. Howitt.

Some lord or squire carried his cardinal's hat, and two gentlemen-ushers went before, crying, 'On, masters, on; make room for my lord!' When his fall was approaching, he presented his Hampton Court Palace, one of the finest in Europe, to the king. The rest of the story we know. How this great man, richer than the king, richer than any king in Europe, fell suddenly from all his state upon the displeasure of his master. Not altogether has he left his old haunts. A spider of a portly kind, unknown elsewhere, is to be met with in the Palace chambers, and the story is, that this is Wolsey haunting the scene of his former greatness.

We cannot stop to describe the halls and chambers, the pictures and tapestry, to be seen in the Palace. On leaving Bushy Park, we enter the delightful gardens, and see the shoal of gold and silver fish; behind a wall, is the Wilderness, full of walks overshadowed with lofty trees; and then, near the gates, is the Maze, a sort of puzzle formed by hedges planted in a pattern, out of which you cannot find your way unless you follow the clue. You may hear the noise of laughter and merry voices from the people who are trying to 'thread the maze.' We can only stop to see the great vine, described as the largest in the world, which has often from two to three thousand bunches of grapes upon it, some of which are sent regularly to the Queen's table.





HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

P. 267.

III.

The village of Teddington, Tide-end-town, marks the spot to which the tide is felt, nineteen miles above London Bridge.

Onward, still, flows the river, towards great London town; past Brentford, where the Brent joins it, and where the old palace of Zion House stands on its northern bank; round Chelsea, really a part of London; under Hammersmith Suspension Bridge, the first of the twelve great passenger bridges which cross the Thames within London. This of Hammersmith, and the granite bridges of London and Waterloo, are among the finest anywhere. Five railway bridges also cross the Thames in London.

Perhaps the grandest view of London is to be had from Westminster Bridge. There is the hoary Abbey close by; beyond it, glimpses of green parks and stately palaces; the magnificent Parliament Houses; and, on the Surrey side, St. Thomas's great Hospital; towards the east, is the round dome of St. Paul's in the distance: while, beyond and about, and stretching out of sight everywhere, are the endless buildings of London—a sea of human habitations: a forest of masts, belonging to vessels trading to every part of the world, throngs the river itself.

> 'Earth has not anything to show more fair:
> Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
> A sight so touching in its majesty:

This city now doth like a garment wear
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields and to the sky,
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep,
And all that mighty heart is lying still.'

These beautiful lines were written by Wordsworth upon old Westminster Bridge early one September morning, before the dark cloud of smoke which spreads over London in the day-time had risen from the million fires of the mighty city.

IV.

Large vessels come up to London Bridge, sixty-four miles from the sea, where the river is about twelve feet deep at low water; it gradually increases in depth as it nears the sea, and vessels of the largest size get as far as Deptford. 'There is no other example in the world, with perhaps the exception of the Amazon, of a river being navigable for large sea-going vessels, through so great a part of its course: its depth of water, the far advance of the tide, and no mud bar at its mouth,' are among the causes why Father Thames, but a small river after all, is renowned as one,—

'Whose ample breast displays unfurled
The ensigns of the assembled world.'

Great docks have been built for the ships on each side of the river—the London Docks, St. Katharine's Docks, the East and West India, and Victoria Docks. East of the City, in the Tower Hamlets in Middlesex, and along the Essex and Kent banks, the people are mostly engaged in seafaring business. The land lies low and is very flat, especially where the 'sedgy Lea' joins the Thames, and in the 'Isle of Dogs,' which it partly surrounds. Here and along the Essex coast the water is kept out by walls and banks. Not altogether though. The river-side houses in the Tower Hamlets and Lambeth are frequently flooded during high tides.

Canvey Isle, another low island, divided from the shore by a narrow creek, lies off the Essex bank of Thames, which is everywhere low and marshy, except at Purfleet, where there are some chalk hills standing by themselves.

Not far from Purfleet is Tilbury Fort, a place of brave memories, for it was here that the men of England gathered to meet the great Spanish Armada, should it ever get nigh English ground, which it did not; the Queen's 'sea-dogs' and the storms of heaven prevented that.

'It was a pleasant sight,' says an old writer, 'to behold the soldiers as they marched towards Tilbury: their cheerful countenances, courageous words and gestures, dancing and leaping wheresoever they came. When rumours of their foes' approach and of coming

battle reached them, they were joyful at such news, as if lusty giants were to run a race.' Then down came Queen Elizabeth and spoke to them the words of a brave queen to her brave people :—

'I am come amongst you, as you see at this time, not for any recreation and disport, but being resolved in the midst and heat of battaile, to live or die amongst you all, to lay down for my God, and for my kingdom, and for my people, my honour and my blood even in the dust. I know I have the bodie of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and of a king of England too! and think foul scorn that Parma, or Spain, or any prince of Europe, should dare to invade the borders of my realm. . . . not doubting but, by your obedience to my general, your concord in the camp, and your valour in the field, we shall shortly have a famous victory over those enemies of my God, of my kingdom, and my people.'

'In the early times of our history, the natural aspect of the Thames below London, and for some distance above it, was widely different to what it is at present. Where smooth pastures now form the banks, with grazing cattle, busy towns and villages, enlivening the landscape, the stream once spread without restraint, covering the surface with shallow and stagnant waters. Under the early Plantagenet kings, embankments were made, at the cost of the citizens, to keep in the vagrant flood, extending to the distance of nearly forty miles.'

The Victoria Thames Embankment of our own

day has rescued a broad and beautiful river-side walk for the citizens from the oozy margin of the river.

We have no room to speak of all the ships which come to occupy their business upon Thames from every part of the world, nor of the endless river craft, the steamers and barges, nor of the 3000 vessels which are employed in carrying coal from the northern coal-field for the use of the mighty city. These things alone would fill a book.

V.—MORE ABOUT OXFORDSHIRE.

OXFORDSHIRE is a farming county, with broad meadows and pasture-fields in the river valleys. It has hill ranges at the two opposite ends, the north-west and the south-east. Those of the north-west are the Edge Hills of Warwick, at the foot of which range are wide heaths.

Cropredy is in this part of the county. During the Civil War, a fight took place upon Cropredy Bridge, in which the king's side was victorious. Banbury, too, is near here, a fact which you know when you steam into the station, for 'Banbury cakes! Banbury cakes!' are brought to the carriage-windows for sale, the very same sort of cakes for which Banbury has been famous for centuries. It has some quaint old inns, and is a town with a history—once famous for its 'zeal.' It stood two long sieges for the king during the Civil War.

We have all heard of Banbury Cross since we were very small people:—

'Ride-a-cock-horse to Banbury Cross,
To see a fine lady ride on a white horse;
With rings on her fingers and bells on her toes,
She shall have music wherever she goes.'

This fine lady was a maiden who dwelt in Banbury Castle, and was wooed by young Edward, the son of a knight who lived in a castle hard by. There is a great festival held at Banbury Castle, and young Edward sees a gallant gentleman whom he takes for his rival. He picks a quarrel with this gentleman, and they fight. His foe turns out to be the lady's brother, but young Edward is nearly killed. Edward is sick to death, and Matilda never leaves his side, and she, too, looks nearly as white as the dying man. A holy monk takes pity on the young lovers, and says to Matilda,

'To-morrow, at the midnight hour,
Go to the cross alone:
For Edward's rash and hasty deed
Perchance thou mayst atone.'

Matilda ventures forth alone in the dark night; she walks round the cross; Edward is cured, and a wedding-feast follows. Then,

'Upon a milk-white steed a lady doth appear:
By all she's welcomed lustily with one tremendous cheer;
With rings of brilliant lustre her fingers are bedeck'd,
And bells upon her palfrey hang, to give the whole effect.'

This is the story of Banbury Cross, which we look for now in vain, for the Puritans destroyed it.

In the old town of Woodstock there was, till quite lately, a royal palace. Here dwelt many of our kings, among the rest, Henry II., who had a bower made in a maze close by, to be the secret abode of the Fair Rosamond. Here the Black Prince was born, and here, it is thought, Chaucer was born, the first of our great English poets. There was a house close by the Park Gate, of which it is said that,

'Here he dwelt
For many a cheerful day; these ancient walls
Have often heard him, while his legends blithe
Of homely life, through each estate and age,
He sang; of love, of knighthood; or the wiles,
The fashion and the follies of the world
With cunning hand portraying.'

Close by Woodstock is the splendid palace and park of Blenheim, a present from the nation to the Duke of Marlborough in memory of the famous victory which he won over the French near the village of Blenheim, on the Danube, in the reign of Queen Anne.

Woodstock is rather famous for its doeskin gloves.

Witney, further south, has a Blanket Hall in its High Street, but *Witney blankets* are no longer made here, but in Wales and Yorkshire.

The interest of the shire centres in the ancient city of Oxford. Here, perhaps, great Alfred dwelt, and it is pleasant to think the University was founded by him, but there are no records to prove the fact.

The Castle, whose grey walls are still to be seen by the old mill, was held by Queen Maud against Stephen. When the fortress could hold out no longer, the queen escaped in the night with three attendants. The ground was covered with snow, and the queen and her attendants, wrapped in white sheets, passed the sentries of the enemy without notice.

Far more interesting is the *Martyrs' Memorial*, which has been lately erected The martyrs were Ridley, Bishop of London ; Hugh Latimer, Bishop of Worcester whose hearty ways, plain speech, and love for the truth made him dear to the people of England; Cranmer, the archbishop, who gathered together the beautiful prayers and services in our Book of Common Prayer. These three, like Hooper, Bishop of Gloucester, and Dr. Taylor, of Hadleigh, were burned alive in the persecution under Queen Mary. Latimer and Ridley perished together. While the flames shot up around him, the old preacher cried to his comrade, 'Play the man, Master Ridley ; we shall this day light such a candle by God's grace in England as I trust shall never be put out.'

The horrible agony of a death by burning filled Cranmer, who was not a strong man, with fear. In a moment of dread he signed a paper denying the faith he held. But when the awful hour came his fear left him. He thrust the hand that had offended first into the fire, saying, 'This was the hand that wrote it, therefore it shall suffer first punishment,' and, holding it still in the flame, he never stirred nor cried till life was gone.

Of the University, little need be said that has not already been said of the University of Cambridge. The early history of both is very much the same. Oxford claims to be the elder sister. This University owes a great deal to Wolsey, who built and endowed Christ Church, one of the largest and most beautiful of the colleges, and who caused the king, Henry VIII., to benefit the University in various ways. Oxford has twenty colleges altogether; perhaps the finest are in the High Street, a street of palaces, in which are Magdalen, and Queen's, and All Souls'. Balliol and Trinity are in Broad Street. Keble College has been founded lately in memory of the author of the *Christian Year*. There is a curious old custom kept up at Magdalen College. Singers assemble on the top of the tower, and, as the last stroke of five dies away on May Day morning, they sing a solemn old Latin hymn in honour of the Trinity. When the singing is over, the boys in the streets make a horrible noise with their tin May-horns, and then the bells peal out from the tower, and drown all other sounds. Thus May morning is welcomed in, and grand doings follow through the day.

Great Tom, the famous bell of Christ Church, is one of the shows of Oxford, a huge bell, more than seven feet across, which tolls 101 times every night at ten minutes past nine.

The contrast between London and Oxford has been well drawn, thus :—

'From noise, glare, and brilliancy, the traveller comes upon a very different scene—a mass of towers,

pinnacles, and spires, rising in the bosom of a valley from groves which hide all buildings, but such as are consecrated to some wise and holy purpose. The same river which, in the metropolis, is covered with a forest of masts and ships, here gliding quietly through meadows, with scarcely a sail upon it; dark and ancient edifices clustered together in forms full of richness and beauty, yet solid, as if to last for ever, such as become institutions raised, not for the vanity of the builder, but for the benefit of coming ages; streets, almost avenues of edifices, which elsewhere would pass for palaces, but all of them dedicated to God; thoughtfulness, repose, and gravity in the countenance and even dress of their inhabitants, and to mark the stir and business of life, instead of the roar of carriages, the sound of hourly bells calling men together for prayer.'

We should see, before we quit Oxford, the Cathedral, the great printing-works of the Clarendon Press, and the Radcliffe Library.

VI.—MORE ABOUT BUCKS.

The centre of Bucks is occupied by the Vale of Aylesbury, one of the richest and most fertile valleys in England, with corn-fields, and meadows, and cherry-orchards, and pastures about which are scattered scores of handsome cows. For Bucks is a great dairy county, in which enormous quantities of butter are made, and sent both to Oxford and to the London market. Sheep and oxen, hogs, ducks, and geese are

also reared in great numbers. Aylesbury, the county town, is a good-sized market town, where lace-making is carried on.

Lacemaking is a common cottage employment in Bucks, and is carried on largely in the four towns upon the Ouse, Buckingham, Stony Stratford, Newport Pagnell, and Olney. The Great Ouse has a very winding course in this county, amongst flags and reeds. Cowper, the gentle poet, whose house at Olney is still shown, tells us how he took a walk with his dog Beau, when,

> 'The noon was shady, and soft airs
> Swept Ouse's silent tide,'

and while the poet walked, Beau—

> 'Now wantoned lost in flags and reeds,
> Now starting into sight,
> Pursued the swallow o'er the meads
> With scarce a slower flight.
> It was the time when Ouse display'd
> His lilies newly blown;
> Their beauties I intent survey'd,
> And one I wish'd my own.'

Beau, seeing his master's desire, plunged into the river, broke off a lily, and brought it to the poet's feet.

Cowper speaks of 'the meads,' for Ouse is bordered with broad meadows; the Ouse Valley is also a fertile corn-growing district.

Buckingham is an old town with a long history.

Stowe, the grand seat of the Dukes of Buckingham, is close to the town. The making of straw-plait is carried on here, and in many towns and villages on the Hertford border.

Paper is made in some towns at the foot of the Chilterns, High Wycombe, Chesham, and some others. About five miles south of Chesham is the village of Chalfont S. Giles, where Milton, the blind poet, stayed while the plague raged in London. Here he revised his great poem, *Paradise Lost*, and wrote the story of *Paradise Regained*. The Chilterns, which cross the county, were once clothed with a great forest of beech and oak; many of them are now cultivated to the top, or are divided into pasture-fields.

VII.—LONDON.

'The people—ah, the people!' Not the same people standing about in a crowd, but new people, always, streaming past like the waters of a river. Not excited people, hurrying to a show; but,—quiet and grave, everybody intent on his own business, nobody dawdling or looking about,—on they pour, in two streams, forward and back. See, there is a countryman—he is peering round to see where all the folk can be going. Now he has got in the way, and is jostled and pushed until he finds his place. We are on London Bridge; and, 'Keep to the right,' and 'Go straight on,' are the only rules by which we can keep our footing.

Surely all London is not so full of people. Let

us try the City. Yonder is the big round dome of St. Paul's to guide us—the dome which is to London as the nose upon its face. Still, we hold our breath, and say, 'The people—ah, the people!' Not the same sort of people, however. These mostly wear black coats, and look keen and full of business. It is one o'clock, and the City clerks are hastening to the eating-houses to lunch. We wish to cross the street. Somebody says, 'Wait till the road is clear'—a joke, evidently. Does this roaring tide of vehicles ever ebb? On they go, up one side of the street, down the other, the back of carriage or cab under the nose of the horse behind. Yes, we are told. Come here on a Sunday, or late in the evening, and you will find these noisy and crowded streets empty and silent. The three millions of London do not live here. Three millions of inhabitants! Why, that is enough to people a country. Holland has not many more; Switzerland, considerably fewer. London is, indeed, a wonderful place. Perhaps there has never been in the world so large, or so rich a city, or a city with such a wide foreign commerce. A walk of eight miles would hardly take you from the farthest east to the farthest west end, and from north to south is not short of six miles. To go round London, you must make a circuit of between twenty and thirty miles.

Londoners have no time to walk much; omnibuses and tramway-carriages carry them about, and help to throng the streets — streets so crowded that a novel plan has been hit upon to lessen the traffic. A

tunnel—an underground passage—has been bored, making a circuit beneath the busiest and most crowded part of the metropolis. Lines of railway are laid in this tunnel, and there are stations above ground at many busy points. People go from place to place by this underground railway, and think no more of it than they would of driving in a cab.

Not only under ground, but under water, have the Londoners bored. They have made a tunnel—a dry road—right under the bed of the Thames, below London Bridge, from the Middlesex to the Surrey side—a road twelve feet broad, which you reach by a sort of shaft with one hundred steps for passengers to go up and down by. This tunnel is now used by the East London Railway Company, and forms part of the line between Liverpool Street and New Cross.

To return to the City. The portion of London to which this name is properly given is really but a small part of the whole. Once the City was enclosed within walls, and was entered by gates; and people who care for relics of old times were sorry when old Temple Bar, the last of the gates, was taken down quite lately. Now there are no gates to show you have entered the City, but the roar of business in Cheapside does not leave you in doubt. The City is the very heart of London, the seat of its vast commerce; and perhaps Cheapside, always in a 'very turmoil of trade,' is the heart of the City.

Running out of Cheapside—indeed out of all the City streets—are narrow byways, where the walls on each side are so high you look up at the bit of sky

between as if from the bottom of a well. These are the warehouses where the merchant-princes keep their precious stores. Now you see why the walls are so high. Room, more room! is the cry here, as in every corner of the vast metropolis; and enormous as many of these stores are, every inch of space from roof to basement is crammed; packed as closely and cleverly as a rose is packed up in its bud.

Silks, or cloths, or cotton stuffs, spices or perfumery; whatever of beautiful or useful men can make, or money can buy, the stores of the City contain these things. And what a kingdom each of these warehouses is! The master—the City merchant—has hundreds of men employed, not in making goods, but simply in packing, and sorting, and selling to wholesale dealers; and every man knows his work, and does it. Goods to the value of thousands of pounds are bought and sold in one such warehouse every day. Well may the men of the City look full of business! Very busy, too, do they keep the Old Lady of Threadneedle Street; so the clerks irreverently call the Bank—the Bank of England. Strangers are allowed to go through some of the rooms; and it is curious to see gold and notes handled with a rapidity which shows that there, at least, time is worth more than money. The beautiful little machine which tests the sovereigns, to see if they are full weight, is one of the interesting sights of the Bank. You would think it endowed with sense to cast aside the light sovereigns quite of its own accord. Then there is the Royal Exchange to be

seen, 'where merchants most do congregate;' but it is beyond us to understand anything about the great money transactions which take place here. We can only look at the outside of the noble building, and, looking up, we catch the words, 'The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof;' a pleasant, restful thought—chosen by 'Albert the Good'—for we are apt to forget that it is as true of the wealth of this busy city as of the fulness of orchard and cornfield.

We must not miss the Mint, where all our money is coined, stamped with the Queen's head; and, above all, we must see the General Post Office, one of the great sights of the City. We must be in St. Martin's-le-Grand before six p.m., in time to see the red mail-carts come in from all parts of London, each with its cargo of letters and parcels. What crowds of people rush up at the last minute, and toss in their letters with a look of relief!

The *port* of London, with which the City has much to do, lies further east, between London Bridge and Blackwall. Here are the Docks, the finest in the world. Those on the Middlesex side are, the London, St. Katherine, West India and East India Docks; and, further on, the Victoria. Along the banks of the river are warehouses and wharves, and workshops and factories of every kind; and a dense mass of narrow streets and crowded houses, the homes of the river-side population—seafaring folk, who have little to do with the rest of London.

VIII.—ST. PAUL'S.

We must not leave the City without a visit to its great church, the Cathedral of St. Paul. St. Paul is the patron saint of the City, and his day was wont to be kept up with much show. There was a procession of the children of all the schools in London, with the lord mayor and aldermen in scarlet, with their cloaks, and all the crafts in their best array. These all came to St. Paul's, with the king; and then, after prayers, they went home again. And at night 'great bonfires were made through all London for the joy of the people that were converted likewise as St. Paul was converted.'

But this was in Old St. Paul's, within whose walls many interesting scenes occurred. Here Wyclif appeared before the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London, to answer for spreading new teaching over the land. But his princely friend, John of Gaunt, came in his armour, and hosts of Wyclif's friends came, ready to do battle for him; and, he being thus supported, no harm befell Wyclif through this trial at St. Paul's.

It would be strange to us to see a church used as was this Old St. Paul's. The floor of the church was laid out in walks. An old writer says, 'The noise in it is like that of bees, in strange hummings or buz, mixt of walking, tongues, and feet; it is a kind of still roar or loud whisper.' It was a common thoroughfare for porters and carriers;

nay, mules and horses, and other beasts were driven through the aisles.

This Cathedral was entirely destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666—a fire in which nearly all London was consumed; a terrible fire, which raged from street to street for four days and nights; and the people who had escaped from their burning houses could but stand looking on, helpless. They could not stop the raging fire-fiend; in vain they tore down houses and brought water as they could; the wind favoured the spread of the flames, and on they rushed;—king and people looking on in despair. From the Tower to Fleet Street was as if a volcano had burst in the midst of it, and destroyed it. The very ruins were reduced to powder. It was a terrible misfortune at the time, but did not prove a bad thing for London in the end. The old streets were narrow, with overhanging stories, so that people might almost shake hands across street out of their top windows; the houses were built of wood, and were very old, mostly, and not over clean. Worse than all, the year before, London had been visited by an awful sickness. There was hardly a house whose door had not been marked with a red cross, to show that some one within lay sick of the plague. At night, carts were carried round the city for the dead; a bell was rung, and 'Bring out your dead! bring out your dead!' was cried before every house. But there were houses in which every one lay dead of the plague, and there was none to bring them out. It was an awful time, and all who could fled from

London in terror. The year after this sickness the fire came, and burnt the old, plague-stricken houses clean away—a merciful thing, for perhaps it was the only way to save London from being again a City of the Plague.

The Cathedral was gone. As it had stood in the middle of the City, and on the highest ground in London, no better site could be chosen for the new St. Paul's, of which Sir Christopher Wren was to be the architect. He made a cathedral quite unlike any other in the country, but very suitable for the great metropolis,—spreading, and vast, as if to gather all London into its broad aisles. And then the dome,—what would London be without the great black dome of St. Paul's? Flying buttresses and tapering spires would not suit our solid City half so well. The tombs of many famous men were destroyed with the old Cathedral; but in the vaults beneath our St. Paul's lie two of England's greatest sons. There, side by side, rest the ashes of Wellington, our greatest soldier; and Nelson, our greatest sailor.

The City of London is, in many ways, under the Lord Mayor and his Council of Aldermen. Perhaps in the Guild Hall, or by the Mansion House, we may get a glimpse of them in their grand civic robes. But we must hasten westward to another city, with another minster, for London contains two.

IX.—WESTMINSTER.

Down the Strand we go, no longer a river-side walk, but a street, busy as those in the City, with shops on each side. We come to Charing Cross, the cross of the '*Chère reine*,' for here was one of the Queen Eleanor crosses. The handsome building on your left is the Charing Cross Railway Station, and that graceful cross was put up by the Company as a restoration of the original cross.

Now we are within the much quieter old city of Westminster, which was once divided from London City by green fields and country lanes. There is the splendid Westminster Palace—the new Houses of Parliament, and Westminster Hall; there is the West Minster itself, the grey old Abbey! How beautiful it is, with its fretted stone-work, and sculptures, and airy pinnacles, and its ascending lines, rising, light as flame, towards the sky! What a look of reverent age it bears! It would seem removed by centuries from the bustle and business of the city we have just left. We go softly as we enter, for within lie the mighty dead. The last honour England pays to her noblest sons is a place among her great in Westminster Abbey. Their monuments crowd about us—statesmen and soldiers, men of science and men of letters, names which belong to England's history. The poets have a corner—Poets' Corner—to themselves, and in Henry VII.'s beau-

tiful chapel rest all our Tudor sovereigns, with the exception of Henry VIII.

No monument is more interesting than the crumbling shrine of the Confessor King, despoiled now of gold and gems, but still surmounted by the iron-bound oaken coffin which contains the ashes of the last Saxon king of England. Dear was the Abbey to him ; he found it, even then, an old minster, and to rebuild and beautify it was the great work of his life. A tenth of his substance, in gold, silver, cattle, and all other possessions, did he give to this work ; and we may think of him watching its progress from his palace hard by—a palace of which no trace remains. Hither came the Conqueror to be crowned ; and the coronation of every king and queen of England, from the Norman William to our Queen Victoria, has taken place in Westminster Abbey, with one exception, the boy-king, Edward V.

Nothing remains of the Confessor's work but a few blackened arches. The Abbey, as we now see it, was rebuilt for the most part by Henry III.

Not far from Westminster is Whitehall, the royal palace in which Charles I. was beheaded, and near it are the government offices, and other interesting buildings of which we cannot stop to speak.

We must go through the parks—Hyde Park and St. James's—and get into the *West End.* The West End is the best end of London, the end where are the mansions and stately houses of the rich and noble, and for a good reason : the wind which blows upon England most days in the year is a west wind,

a wind which blows up from the Atlantic; the wind drives the smoke before it, and the smoke from the chimneys of these West End houses is carried east, towards the city.

The two finest streets of shops in this part of London are Regent Street and Oxford Street. Very fine shops they are, with such shows of silks, and velvets, and furs, gems and laces, pictures and porcelain, in their windows as country folk do not often see.

X.

These are the divisions of London which everybody knows: beyond these, there are the densely peopled districts which are less known to the world than if they were foreign lands. There are quarters where the same handicraft has been carried on from father to son for hundreds of years. 'The potters of Lambeth, the hatters of Southwark, the tanners of Bermondsey, the coachmakers of Long Acre, the watchmakers of Clerkenwell, the old clothesmen of Holywell Street and Rosemary Lane,' have carried on the same craft in the same spot for nobody knows how long. And the Spitalfields weavers—it is easy to know their abodes; they dwell in narrow, crowded, dingy streets, and along the upper stories of their houses run wide, lattice-like windows, to throw a strong light upon every part of the looms, which usually stand just under them. There is little of *fields* in Spital*fields* but the name, though the district was once broad meadows about an hospital, or spital,

fo unded some seven centuries ago. These poor silk-weavers are ill paid and ill fed, for they still do some work by hand which is done usually now by steam-power. There is no more sad part of London than Spitalfields, for the quiet, patient-looking people have seen better days. Once, their trade was much thought of, and theirs was a rich and prosperous craft. They a e mostly descended from the French Protestants who took refuge in England two centuries ago, when Louis XIV. drove many of his best subjects, the uguenots, out of France.

We have no room to speak of the British Museum of the National Gallery, or of the statues of great en, or of a hundred other interesting things which to be seen, but we must pay a visit to

XI.—THE TOWER OF LONDON.

There it stands, on the bank of Thames, a strong fo tress for the protection of the city, east of which it lies. It is not one tower, but many, grey and old, with walls so thick that a winding staircase has been built in more than one place in the thickness of the masonry. A Tower Palace was once enclosed with the fortress within the strong outer walls—a palace in which Henry VIII. received each of his new queens with royal feastings, and where many of our kings have held court; but little of the palace re- r ains.

It is not for the sake of palace or fortress that e very English person cares to visit the Tower: since

the days of the Conqueror this has been the state prison of England.

In one or another of its narrow chambers have been confined many of our country's heroes who have fallen under the displeasure of the Crown. The walls of many of the cells are scratched all over with brave, patient words, or with the names of those dearest to the noble prisoners. The IANE . IANE scratched by the poor young Lord Guildford Dudley is still to be seen. His wife, Jane, was in another room of the prison, and there is the window at which she stood, praying, while she watched her young husband led forth to die a traitor's death within the walls of the fortress—the traitor's death which she was next to suffer herself. Three weeks before she had entered the fortress as queen of England.

There is the Bloody Tower, in a chamber of which the two young princes, Edward V. and his brother, were smothered by order of their uncle, afterwards Richard III. In this Bloody Tower Sir Walter Raleigh was confined by James I. for twelve dreary years, for no fault of his.

There is the Traitors' Gate, a water-gate fronting the Thames, by which the young Princess Elizabeth was brought in from her home, Hatfield House, in Herts. She was filled with fear and anger when she found the barge was entering by this dreaded gate. It rained hard, and a certain lord offered her his cloak; but she put her hand back with a good dash, and then, as she set her foot on the stairs, she cried

out aloud, 'Here landeth as good a subject, being a prisoner, as ever landed at these stairs!' The Princess Elizabeth was shortly released.

Not so had it fared with the most gentle, witty, and wise of statesmen, Sir Thomas More. He had been brought hither from his pleasant house at Chelsea, in the gardens of which he and the king had often walked up and down in merry talk. But the king, Henry VIII., would have him say it was right for him to put away his wife, Catherine, and to marry another lady. More thought this wrong, and could not say it was right, though he knew he should forfeit his head for thus crossing the king's pleasure. So he was brought to the Tower.

The story of his imprisonment is too long to tell —how his dear daughter, Margaret Roper, came to see him, and brought him sweetmeats, which she knew he was fond of; how he cheered his wife with wise and merry sayings; how he was full of cheerful trust in God to the end; how his dear daughter broke from the crowd to embrace him once more on his way to the scaffold; and how she begged for the noble head after it had been severed from his body. We have no room for this and other stories of the Tower; for, indeed, the history of the Tower is the history of England.

There is little to be said about the county of Middlesex beyond London. It is rather hilly and pleasant, and the handsome houses of rich people stand among trees in every pleasant spot, for the suburbs of London stretch far on all sides. Hamp-

stead is one of these pleasant spots. It stands at the foot of a wide, open heath, 430 feet above the sea. Highgate Hill is about the same height, and so is the hill on which the town of Harrow stands, famous for its old Grammar School. Primrose Hill, just beyond Regent's Park—a hill of which the Londoners think a great deal—is not more than half the height of these. There is some high ground, hills and heaths, in the north, on the Hertfordshire border. After London, there are no important towns in the county. Brentford has but one long street on the bank of the Brent. Hounslow stands on the edge of a wide heath, of celebrity in other days as a haunt of highwaymen. Uxbridge has a corn-market, and Staines is another small town.

XII.—ESSEX.

Of Essex, also, little need be said ; the coast on the German Ocean is so low, that the sea is only kept out by sea-walls and embankments ; and all along the shore are marshes, which have been well drained and made into pasture-fields. The Naze is the most easterly point of the county, and stretches out near Harwich, a small bathing-place and packet-station. There are many creeks on the coast—the outlets of the rivers. Still, excepting just at the east and south-east—the parts of the coast bordered by the Thames mouth, which are as flat as a table—there are pleasant uplands with trees scattered over the county. It is a farming county ; wheat, and other

kinds of corn, are largely grown ; and, near London, there are a great many market-gardens. There were once large forests in Essex, of which Epping Forest is the largest remaining. It is upon high ground, and is a favourite holiday-place for Londoners. Colchester, which is chiefly noted for its oyster-fishery, si the largest town. In the persecution under Mary, more than seventy Protestants of Colchester were dragged through London at the end of a rope. At Brentwood, a young boy named William Brown was burnt at the stake, and people noticed that the sun lighted up his face as if it had been the face of an angel, when he called upon his Lord. Chelmsford, a market-town, is the county-town.

CORNWALL.

I.

CORNWALL is not like the rest of England; the natives have habits of their own, and the remains of a language of their own. The land itself is not like that of other counties, and the people have unusual ways of earning their living.

Cornwall is at the very end of England, the south-west end. It is a sort of horn stretching out into a stormy sea, which washes it all round, except on the Devon side, and on this side the river Tamar nearly makes an island of it.

The Saxons called this out-of-the-way corner, Cornwall,' which means, the horn of the strangers or foreigners, because here the Britons held their own for from four to five hundred years against the invaders who had conquered the rest of the country. When nearly all England had become Saxon, Cornwall was still a British kingdom, a foreign land. The descendants of these Britons still occupy Cornwall, and though they no longer speak the ancient Cornish

tongue, they have words and ways yet which show their origin.

This county is in itself a history of England; the most ancient of all histories; to be read, not in printed books, but in rocks and ruins, and strange folk-lore; a history which carries us back to days before those when King David ruled in Israel.

Granite is the substance of its ancient rocks; an exceedingly fine, hard stone, which takes a high polish, and is beautiful, to adorn our churches, and firm and durable enough to support our bridges. This stone is so fine and hard, because it was formed deep in the earth, under the pressure of perhaps ten miles of other rock, which lay upon the melted lava-like matter which was some day to appear as granite.

But if granite were formed so many miles below the earth's surface, how comes it to appear above ground in Cornwall and elsewhere? Because, in the course of many ages, the rocks which overlay it have been stripped aside or worn away; and all the waste from these has gone to make new rocks elsewhere.

This granite formation goes through the whole length of Cornwall, from Devon to the Land's End, rising in huge bosses here and there, and giving a peculiar character to the country.

For granite is no friend to the farmer; there is seldom any depth of soil upon it; and though here and there, even upon the Moors, there are cultivated patches and trees, much of Central Cornwall is waste moorland.

Entering the county from Devon, by the Cornwall

railway, we must cross Mr. Brunel's wonderful suspension bridge at Saltash, which carries the railway from the hills of Devon to those of Cornwall, at a height of one hundred feet above the water of the Tamar estuary, here wider than the Thames at Westminster. The bridge is about half-a-mile long, and is a marvel of engineering skill.

Saltash itself, inhabited by fishermen, stands on the steep bank of the Tamar, the old houses rising in rows, one row above another.

Going on by rail to Liskeard, we pass through country full of hills, and hollows, and deep gorges; but not by any means bare. This part of Cornwall is richly wooded, with all kinds of forest trees and many apple-orchards.

Between the four towns of Liskeard, Bodmin, Camelford, and Launceston, lies the Bodmin Moor, the dreariest and wildest tract in Cornwall, though not without an interest of its own.

The town of Liskeard stands upon rather high, well-cultivated land; it is a good point from which to cross the Moors.

II.—THE MOORS.

For many miles the waste stretches away without any break but the rounded moor hills; these are commonly capped with cairns, formed of huge blocks of granite, heaped together in fantastic shapes.

These cairns tell a tale of their own, and are a bit of very early history. The Britons loved to bury their

famous warriors upon their hill-tops; and to make these graves the more conspicuous, piled cairns upon them, that men who came after should say, 'Some warrior lies here.' The coffin was often placed upon the top of the cairn, and was a great stone chest, or *kistvaen*. Sometimes the kistvaen was placed in a mound of earth, or *barrow*, which, also, it was the custom to raise upon a hill-top. There are many such barrows on the hills in the north of Cornwall. The slopes of the moor hills are mostly strewn with great blocks of granite.

Perhaps Rowtor bristles all over with cairns more than any hill on the moor. They are formed of the largest blocks of granite in Cornwall, lodged on one another in a curious way, and giving Rowtor a magnificent appearance, more grand and rugged than any mountain in Cornwall, though it is not quite the highest.

Under the north side of this hill are many of the circles of unhewn stone, which are supposed to be the foundations of the round huts with pointed roofs which were the homes of the ancient people.

Not far from Rowtor, is Brown Willy, the highest of the Cornish hills (1368 feet). It is, perhaps, more beautiful than its neighbour, if not so grand. Granite cairns surmount the crest of Brown Willy, but its sides are less rugged than those of Rowtor.

Near this mountain is one of the many valleys, or *bottoms*, as they are called, which furrow the Cornish moors; most of them, like this, are occupied by stream-works, some disused, and some in full force.

The tin which has made Cornwall famous for more than two thousand years, is generally to be found in granite; and when, in the course of ages, the granite becomes worn down, much of the tin is dislodged, and sinks in grains to the bottoms. It is supposed that the tin, for which the Romans came to Cornwall before they had conquered Britain, was obtained by *streaming;* that is, by sending a stream of water through the bottom, with force enough to carry away the earthy matter, and so leave the heavier tin exposed. The most important stream-works of Cornwall are on, or near, the south coast.

The stranger who ventures across Bodmin Moor may easily find himself in one of the deep bogs which fill up the low land, as the moor is apt to be wrapped in thick sea-fogs, which rise without warning; or the traveller may be nearly blinded by such storms of wind, full of sea-spray or pelting rain, as only Cornwall knows. Dozmare Pool is one of the marvels of the Moor; a dismal pool among gloomy hills, which, though it is only four or five feet deep, the country folk think unfathomable. A haunted pool, for here the giant Tregeagle may be heard howling through the noise of the wintry wind. Small wonder that he howls, for his is a hopeless task; day and night must he labour to empty the pool with the little shell of a limpet. Occasionally, too, he is hunted by the devil round and round the pool, when he flies for refuge to the Roche Rocks, some fifteen miles away on Tregoss Moor, such another waste as that of Bodmin. These are a pile of great rock masses, one hundred feet high,

with the ruins of a little chapel in the midst. Hither flees the poor giant on stormy nights, and thrusts his head in at the chapel window, and thus escapes his tormentor.

Nor is Tregeagle, once a wicked lord, who has been set to empty the pool as a punishment, the only Cornish giant; you will doubtless remember that Jack the Giant-killer himself, of nursery lore, was a Cornishman.

Launceston, one of the towns from which the moor might be approached, is chiefly remarkable for a ruined castle, surrounded by three walls. It was very loyal to Charles I. during the Civil War.

Bodmin, near the borders of the moor, was once the largest town in Cornwall; it is still the county-town, and the assizes are held here, but it is not otherwise of much importance.

III.—KING ARTHUR AND TINTAGEL.

Leaving the moor at Camelford, and turning a little to the north, we come to Slaughter Bridge, where the hero of British romance, the fair King Arthur, received his mortal wound in battle with his ungrateful nephew, Mordred.

Beyond the bridge, upon the coast, is Tintagel Castle, the birthplace of the king, if, indeed, he had a mortal birth. At any rate, here he dwelt, and here, when he was only fifteen, he is said to have borne rule over Danmonium, now Devon and Cornwall. Here he bound his knights of the Round Table, by holy vows,

to live pure lives, to protect the weak, and to right such wrong as they anywhere should find. And very gentle and pure, fearless and strong, were many of his knights; but none might compare with the matchless king. The queen was very fair, and her ladies were fair, and gay was the sight when knights and ladies rode forth from the castle to chase or tourney.

But the land was filled with lawless men, who wronged the poor, and oppressed the weak, and the king and his knights led toilful lives, for they had vowed to give themselves no rest, but to do battle for Christ's sake, while such wrongs remained in the land.

Such was the gentle king who was wounded to the death in battle with his nephew, who had allied himself with Cerdic, the Saxon king of Wessex. The king did not fall until the war had raged for seven years, and twelve great battles had been fought.

His people declared that Arthur did not die, that his passing was as strange as his coming. His sword, Excalibur, said they, passed in flame, and a fair vessel, rowed by ghostly hands, bore the king from the eyes of his friends.

Nothing remains of the old castle but its ruined walls, dark and solemn, rising out of the rock on which they are built as if they were a part of it.

Tintagel Castle is a fitting spot to have been the home of a hero-king. It is built upon a high headland, one of the most wild and beautiful spots in Cornwall; this promontory is really a peninsula, joined to the mainland by a neck of broken rocks,

through which there is a sort of long narrow cavern or tunnel. The ruins of the castle are partly on the peninsula and partly on the mainland, and the two parts appear to have been at one time connected by a drawbridge. The walls of rude stone, with china-clay for mortar, still cover a great space, and show the square apertures through which King Arthur's knights may have aimed their arrows, and the low-arched entrances under which they must have come and gone.

About three miles to the north of Tintagel is Boscastle, the road between them being a sort of natural terrace, with cliffs on the sea-side and hills on the land-side.

The town stands on a steep hill which rises out of furze-covered valleys. The harbour of Boscastle is one of the sights of Cornwall. It is one of the little lovely inlets, or *porths*, as they are called, which break every part of the Cornish coast—sheltered coves, bordered by high cliffs. Those on the north coast have beaches of shelly sand, which donkey boys carry away in the autumn for a dressing for the land.

The cliffs between Boscastle and Tintagel are of slate, so curiously broken and storm-worn as to look like huge ruins.

The sea has worn deep caverns round the coast of Boscastle harbour, and these have strange inmates during the summer: seals repose upon the ledges — perhaps to enjoy the coolness and shade. But the fishermen have found out their haunts, and, when the sea is smooth enough, they enter the caverns with

flaming torches ; the sudden glare alarms the seals ; they do not attempt to escape, and many are killed every summer for their oil and skins.

Still in the slate district, about seven miles south of Boscastle, are the Delabole quarries—three enormous pits, with dark blue hills of rubbish all about, where a thousand men are employed in raising the slate. It is a busy scene : throngs of men, waggons, horses, steam-engines, and, rising slowly upon the guide-chains, large trucks full of the heavy slate. These guide-chains are wound up by the engines, and raise the trucks from the bottom of the quarries. The slate is first loosened by charges of gunpowder, and then torn up with crowbars, and placed upon trucks, which are attached to the guide-chains.

IV.—THE LOST CHURCH OF ST. PIRAN.

Further south, on the coast, is Padstow, an old-fashioned fishing-town, with a very fishy smell.

St. Columb Major is a few miles inland : it is named after St. Columb, one of St. Patrick's missionary bishops, and stands on the borders of Tregoss Moor. This moor is said to have been King Arthur's hunting-ground ; but if it was as bare then as it is now, the chase must have offered poor sport.

Nearing the coast again, we come to Perrans Porth, a little bathing-place, near which is a solitary stretch of sand which is constantly gaining upon the land. Sand-hills, and the burrows of countless rabbits are the only objects to be seen ; and, in the heart of this

lonely spot among the sandy dunes, rise the ruins of the church of St. Piran—a church which was lost, buried among the sands for ten centuries, and at last disclosed by the shifting of the sands themselves. It is built of rude stone; china-clay is used for mortar, and there is a little baptistery near, built over a well. It is supposed to be an ancient British church. There is a curious legend about St. Piran, to whom the church is dedicated:—

St. Patrick came over from Ireland to preach Christianity to the Cornish men. He found them willing to listen, and on his return to Ireland, sent over twelve bishops to teach them further: St. Piran was one of these, and he thought fit to cross the sea on a mill-stone as a proof of the truth of his doctrine.

V.—THE MINES.

Cornwall is a great mining county. Barren and poor as the moors look, they have a wealth of their own: the tin for which Cornwall has been famous for these two thousand years is held in their granite crust.

Right through Cornwall, from Devon to the Land's End, tin is found, either in *bottoms*, from which it is got by streaming, or the tin ore runs in veins or lodes below the surface. These veins vary in width from an inch to some yards, and usually run in a direction from east to west. A shaft is sunk and a mine opened where a good lode has been found. Some of the largest mines are on or near the south coast: St.

Austell, St. Blazey, Carclaze. The last is a very interesting mine, as it is open to daylight, and crowds of men and horses may be seen at work. It is a huge, white, silvery pit, in the side of a black moor-hill, and looks like an opening into a mountain of silver.

Now, and, indeed, since the time of Queen Elizabeth, most of the tin used in Europe is brought from Cornwall. Truro, which stands on an inlet of the sea, called Truro River, is in the centre of a mining country, and exports tin. It is really the busiest and most important town in Cornwall. A clear rivulet runs through the town, and is led through every street; it has paper-mills, foundries, smelting-houses, and, in the museum, a collection of Cornish birds. Henry Martyn, the Eastern missionary, was the son of a miner of Truro.

Copper ore is as abundant as tin in the granite, and the veins run in the same general direction. The copper-mining country begins to the south of Truro. Redruth is the centre of a famous district, which includes Gwennap, St. Agnes, and Illogan. Heaps of rubbish, upon which no green thing will grow, disfigure the country; and there is little of interest to be seen, as the works are mostly underground.

When a good lode has been found, a well-like shaft is sunk to a great depth; then, running out from this, at a distance of sixty or one hundred feet below one another, long galleries or tunnels are driven so as to enable the miner to get at the metal. These underground *levels* in the Gwennap mines measure altogether more than sixty miles.

There is always much water in the mines, which must be got rid of by pumping; an engine, capable of raising water from a depth of 2000 feet, is employed.

The miners go to work dressed in flannel—the best kind of clothing to absorb perspiration—though in the lower levels of the deep mines they work naked to the waist; for it is a curious fact, that the lower we go in a mine the warmer it becomes. There is little to be seen in such a mine, though there may be hundreds of men at work in the miles of underground galleries; they work quietly, each by himself, breaking down the ore by the light of a candle fixed to his hat with a lump of clay.

A visit to Botallack Mine, near St. Just, might be a little exciting, as that and a few other mines run under the sea, and the miners may hear the waters overhead.

The underground miners, or *tributers*, like their work, as they have a share in the profits—so much for every pound of ore they get. They are, as a rule, clever, good-looking men, and are, very generally, teetotallers and Wesleyans.

The Cornish miners have to thank Wesley for much: about a hundred and fifty years ago they were so wild and drunken a set that strangers were afraid to go into Cornwall, which was then known as Barbary, and its people as barbarians.

Into this wild country John Wesley came, purposing that the Cornishmen should live as pagans no longer. They pelted him, mocked him, nearly killed him; but he would not be driven from among them.

He went from end to end of the county, preaching, teaching, pleading, until at last the hard hearts were broken; and wherever Wesley preached, in pit or on moor-side, they came in crowds to hear. Often he would preach upon the desolate moors far into the night, the sound of his voice being broken only by the sobs of the listening multitude. His work has not passed away. To this day the Cornishmen live sober, earnest lives; and every Whit Monday, which day they keep as their anniversary, between 20,000 and 30,000 people collect in the great Gwennap Pit, where he so often preached to the miners, to celebrate the memory of Wesley.

VI.—THE PILCHARD FISHERY.

Twice every year, in July and August, and again in October and November, the Cornish folk all along the south coast are busy with the pilchard fishery. The pilchard is a fish found only about the Cornish and Devon coasts. It is rather smaller than the herring, but so like it that only people who are accustomed to pilchards can tell one from the other. The pilchards spend the winter in deep water to the west of the Scilly Isles; when spring comes, they begin to collect in small shoals, and about the beginning of July millions of them gather together under the 'Pilchard King,' and make for the shore with such force that the foremost ones are driven upon the beach. Now is the time for the fishermen. *Huers* (callers) have been watching upon the headlands for some

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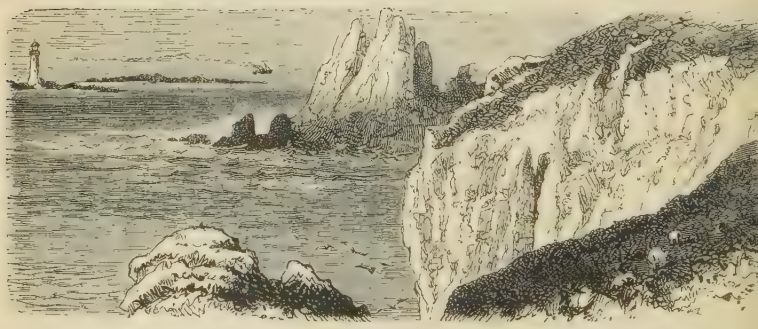
time, solitary men, gazing out to sea with glass fixed upon the most distant spot at which the pilchards will begin to darken the waters. 'Heva! heva! heva!' (found!) they cry, and at once all is bustle in the villages below, where the people have been on the watch for this sign. Boats are manned, the great seine net, perhaps 300 yards long, is taken out, with its three attending boats; the rowers make for the shoal of pilchards, the huer directing them by signals. Then one boat rows gently round the shoal, dropping the net, which is about ten or twelve feet deep, as it goes; a second boat holds the net tight at the other end; it is gradually drawn round the shoal of fish, the two ends are drawn together, and millions of pilchards are caught in a single taking. They are kept in the sea, enclosed in the net, for perhaps a week, being taken to shore a few thousands at a time, as fast as the girls and women can salt them. The casks of pilchards are mostly sent to Italy and Spain, Roman Catholic countries, where fish must be eaten many days in the year. St. Ives is one of the fishing-towns, very pretty and picturesque, but with a strong odour of pilchards. About 10,000 persons are employed in this pilchard-fishery.

VII.—LAND'S END AND THE LIZARD.

The Land's End, the most westerly point of England, is a huge rampart of granite cliffs which seems to have been set where it is to resist the fury of the Atlantic storms. Perhaps the fact is, that land which

lay beyond this point has been washed away. The point which juts farthest into the sea is about sixty feet high, and is pierced by a sort of natural tunnel. On either side are still higher cliffs; below them, huge rocks, against which the sea is constantly breaking; and in the cliffs are caverns, many of them large enough to hold twenty men, with smooth, shining walls of granite, polished by the action of the waves.



LAND'S END.

People usually visit Land's End from Penzance, a pretty little town ten miles from the End, where nearly every building is of granite. It stands on the beautiful and sheltered Mount's Bay, where the climate is so mild that Penzance is famous for its early vegetables. Southern flowers, which will only grow in greenhouses in other parts of England, flourish here in the open air.

Going from Penzance westward to Land's End,

the country becomes more bleak and barren every mile; the cottages are rough and poor; the granite churches, heavy-looking, as if built to stand firm in violent gales. The last village is a mile from the sea; then follows a common strewn with blocks of granite. The End itself stretches about 100 yards into the sea beyond the rest of the coast: the cliffs, about eighty feet high, going sheer down into the water. The very End is a flat table of granite, three or four feet square, with the sea roaring eighty feet below. The neck which joins this to the shore is penetrated by the waves so as to form an arch.

About thirty miles from the Land's End are the Scilly Islands, a large group of islands formed of granite, six of which only are inhabited. They seem to continue the granite highlands of Cornwall, and there is a tradition that they were once joined to the mainland by the 'sweet land of Lyonesse,' where some of King Arthur's battles were fought; but this land, with all its people and more than one hundred churches, was swept away by a sudden rising of these stormy seas. So at least says the legend. The Scilly Isles belong now to a Mr. Augustus Smith, who is most kind to the people, most of whom are sailors or fishermen. St. Mary's is the largest island; Mr. Smith's beautiful gardens are in Tresco, where the climate is so mild that even tropical plants grow freely.

The whole of the projection forming the heel of Cornwall, which ends in Lizard Head, is formed of a beautiful rock called serpentine, perhaps because it

has streaks resembling the skin of a serpent. It is generally of an olive-green colour.

The Lizard district, approached from inland, is rather a dreary table-land, but its soil favours one beautiful plant, the white Cornish heath, the rarest and most beautiful of English heaths.

There are two large lighthouses upon Lizard Point, but many ships are lost notwithstanding in foggy weather off this dangerous headland. The cliffs are so steep that it is impossible to send help from shore to a sinking ship.

The most beautiful sight at the Lizard is Kinance Cove: a snow-white beach washed by a blue sea, a background of cliffs, green, and purple, and red; pebbles of gorgeous colours strewed on the white sand; the cliffs pierced by caverns with polished walls of all beautiful colours, fresh and glowing from a sea-bath,—these are some of the beauties of Kinance Cove. The three chief caverns are named the Parlour, the Drawing-room, and the Kitchen.

St. Michael's Mount, upon which was once a chapel dedicated to the saint, looks down upon the cove, and near it is Helstone, a very old town, where the devil is said once to have had a contest with St. Michael, in which the saint was victorious, and in memory of the victory the inhabitants hold a festival on the 8th of May every year, which is called *Furry Day*. After a morning spent in the woods, the people return with flowers and branches, and dance hand in hand through the streets, and in and out of all the houses, following a fiddler, who plays an air called

furry-tune. The real origin of this custom is not known.

Penryn, famous for its beautiful granite, of which Waterloo Bridge is made, and Falmouth, are the last places of interest we can notice. Falmouth Harbour is one of the finest in England, though the town itself is just one long narrow street which straggles along by the side of the water. Sir Walter Raleigh really made the town in the first place, that is, he was so struck with the fine harbour that he drew attention to the spot, and a village soon sprung up.

Cornwall is a duchy, settled upon the eldest son of the sovereigns of England.

DEVONSHIRE.

I.

LEAFY Devon is the beauty of the western counties. It has a blue sea margin north and south, bordered with cliffs, which, on the south coast, are often of pink or grey marble; trees fringe the coast, almost to the water's edge, and the very cliffs are hung with creepers.

Much of Central Devon is a breezy moorland, bleak and barren enough, and there is another stretch of moor towards the north; but spurs from these high moors reach the coast, both north and south; and between these spurs are deep shadowy *combes*, the valleys of the sparkling moorland streams.

The villages nestle in these combes; and very pretty a Devon village is, with its narrow, steep lanes, bordered by high hedges, and its snug-looking cottages with thatched roofs and rosy walls of cob. Cob is made of the reddish mud of the district mixed with pebbles. The villages often lie among great orchards of apple-trees, and myrtle grows freely about the cottage doors.

The well-swept cottage floor is mostly of cracked cement; the deal table is white as milk; and perhaps a kindly woman, who speaks in a soft and gentle key peculiar to Devon, offers sweet brown bread and hard cider for the refreshment of the traveller.

Pleasant as the whole county is, the very garden of Devon is the *South Hams*, the district south of Dartmoor, and between the Tamar and the Teign.

This is the cider country, with orchards of apple-trees like forest trees for size.

Cider-making is the great business of the autumn in the South Hams. The gathered apples are allowed to lie for two or three weeks exposed to the air; then when they have begun to rot, they are ground in a mill; the broken apple, or *cheese*, as it is called, is placed under a press, and the juice is drawn out. After one or two more processes, this juice is put in casks, and is ready for use. Cider is the general drink in Devon.

Though so unlike Cornwall in many ways, Devon is built on the same kind of rocky framework. The central moors are of granite, and, like those of Cornwall, contain copper and tin ore; the mines and stream-works being managed in much the same way.

Both Cornwall and Devon have been mining counties for many centuries; though both have improved greatly in the art since Queen Elizabeth invited German miners to come over and teach her poor 'spadiards' the mysteries of their craft.

Though it is made in both counties, Devonshire has the greatest name for its 'clouted cream;' deli-

cious cream, thick and solid enough to be cut with a knife, which is made by scalding the milk over a wood fire.

Junkets are another Devonshire dainty, made of cream and spice, and all things nice ; but how, only Devon folk know.

II.—NORTH DEVON.

The combes along the north coast lie between the spurs of Exmoor, which come down to the water's edge.

Exmoor, itself, is just a tract of moorland rising everywhere into dark hills, of which Dunkerry Beacon (1668 feet) is the highest.

The two Lyns, East and West, are mountain torrents, which, when they leave Exmoor, come tumbling along over stones ; the one, through a thickly wooded combe ; the other, between bare, stony hills, till they flow into the sea by one mouth, at which stands the beautiful little village of Lynmouth, shut in among cliffs. A steep road leads from Lynmouth to Lynton, which looks out over the moors.

Combe Martin is a long village, also lying in a valley. It is famous for its two silver-lead mines, which did England good service in the reigns of both Edward III. and Henry V. ; they helped to bear the cost of the Hundred Years' War with France. The levels of these mines run underneath the village.

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Ilfracombe, a watering-place, and Barnstaple, which has lace-mills, and Bideford, which is built on a hill-side and overlooks the Torridge, are all pleasant North Devon towns. Near Bideford is Clovelly, a fishing village, which seems to hang in the air. It is built on a hill-side so steep that the only way up is by a zigzag pavement; and towards the top, by a flight of steps.

Lundy Island, about eighteen miles off, may be seen from Clovelly; a granite island, bordered by granite cliffs, and best known through the story of its capture by a French ship in the reign of William and Mary.

The Frenchmen, who were sailing under Dutch colours, came with a coffin, and begged to be allowed to land and bury their captain, who, they said, had died on board. The kind Lundy people let them land; the foreigners shut themselves up in the church, and in a few minutes burst out, fully armed, upon the poor islanders; slaughtered the cattle, burnt the houses, stripped the people, and then took ship and sailed away.

III.—DARTMOOR

is a great granite table-land, which measures more than twenty miles each way: a waste where there is no sound of living thing, bird or beast, but an awful stillness, broken only by the roaring of the winds and the torrents. No habitation is within sight for many miles; everywhere, billowy hills and dark glens, where not even furze will grow. Heather,

reeds, and moss, and the whortle-berry, are the moor plants.

There is a large morass in the centre of the moor which will not bear the lightest-footed creature; and here rise many of the streams which rush as brawling torrents across the moor, and then descend through the beautiful combes of South Devon. The Dart, Teign, Tavy, and, flowing north, the Taw, all get their pure azure water from this morass; azure except after heavy rains, when the torrents are red with the peat they have torn up. And this is not seldom, for north wind, south wind, east wind, west, every wind that blows, seems to bring rain to Dartmoor. When there is not rain, a thick sea-mist often wraps the moor for a week together. The prospect, when it is to be had, is very fine,—the wide stretch of hilly waste, the faint tints of the hills, and their delicate shadows.

The *Tors*, great granite rocks crowning the hills, of all strange shapes, like castles, or giants, or huge beasts, are the most remarkable things on the moor. They all have names of their own, and give their names to the hills they crown. Yes Tor (2050 feet), is the highest; a good deal higher than the Cornish Brown Willy, than which, indeed, nineteen of the Dartmoor Tors are higher.

From the top of Yes Tor there is a grand view; ridges of dark moor hills stretching away for miles, which there is no way of reaching, as they lie among the bogs; bogs on the summits, on the slopes, in the valleys, bog and granite everywhere; and here and

there, great black rents or openings in the bog, crossing the moor like a net-work.

Cawsand Beacon, and the Great Lynx, with its tor like a ruined castle, and many others, are visible from Yes Tor, which is itself a desolate hill with streams of loose granite down its sides.

Fur Tor, Hound Tor, Rough Tor, Brent Tor, Hare Tor, are among the chief heights; and Sheeps Tor, which is full of caverns and hollows and queer hiding-places, is the favourite haunt of the small folk of Devon, the Pixies, invisible to mortal eyes. Indeed, it is said that the Pixy-king himself holds court among its dark hollows.

Perhaps you have never heard of the Pixies; but if you were Devon-born you would know well enough about the small green people who sport in the dark levels of the mines; particular little folk, as the miner knows, for he does not venture to whistle when he gets underground; mischievous folk, too, for they haunt the moors and dwell among the tors; and many a traveller, so the country people tell, has been pixy-led far out of his way, under cover of the mist, to be lost at last in a morass. Anybody who ventures near Sheepstor drops a pin as an offering to the Pixies, who are rather miserly in their ways. Indeed Sheepstor is said to be rich in precious metals, grains of silver and even of gold, which have been stored by these 'little Pixies, fair and slim.'

There is a large prison on the moor, where more than a thousand convicts are confined; they are made to cultivate the moor about the prison walls.

IV.—THE MINES

lie chiefly between Dartmoor and the Tamar; that is, in the Tavy valley, and about the well-to-do town of Tavistock, where Sir Francis Drake was born. Copper, tin, lead, and other metals are found in this district. The Tamar silver-lead mine, near Beer Ferrers, is remarkable because the ore lies under the bed of the river, and it was found very difficult to ventilate the mine. The two great copper-mines, Devon Great Consols, and Huel (Cornish for mine) Friendships, are among the richest in the world. The country about there is dark with smoke, and bristles with engine-chimneys rising from among the huts of the miners.

V.—PLYMOUTH AND THE EDDYSTONE.

Plymouth, Stonehouse, and Devonport, all on the Plymouth Sound, are, in fact, one great town. Plymouth is the city, the trading-place, full of shops and the stir of business. Devonport, built on higher ground, is the fashionable *West End*, and Stonehouse is filled with hospitals and manufactories. Plymouth is supplied with water from Dartmoor by a leet or artificial channel. Sir Francis Drake had this leet brought into the town; and when the work was finished, people, mayor and corporation, went out to meet the stream, and followed it through the town with music and the firing of cannons. The country people tell the tale in a different way. They say Sir

Francis knew what trouble the washerwomen had to get water, so one day he took his horse, rode to the moors, and hunted about for a suitable stream. Then, saying some magical words, he desired the stream to follow him, and galloped back to the town with the water at his heels.

In Stonehouse are the Naval Hospital and the Victualling Yard for the ships. The last is an enormous place, with beef-houses, where there are always many thousand pieces of salt beef in store; stores for vegetables, for books, for clothes, for bedding, and a long wing of the building for corn and baking. Within the bake-house, all the work is done by an invisible giant, a mighty fellow who does the work of a thousand bakers at once; grinds the corn, kneads the dough, spreads it ready for biscuits, cuts it up, and has a sack of flour ready for the oven in two minutes. Steam is this rapid workman, who is employed in all the stores.

The great show in Devonport is the Dockyard. In the *Building Slips* ships are to be seen at every stage, from the skeleton frame to the finished vessel. Near by, are kilns, where planks for the ships are steam-boiled to give them the proper curve. Then there is the blacksmith's shop, with its forty-eight forges, always filled with smoke and with a terrible din; in it, too, is Nasmyth's great hammer, heavy enough to pound a house down, yet so delicately managed, that it can crack a nut without crushing the kernel. These are only a few of the things to be seen in the Dockyard, which is open to visitors.

The Sound is a great station for our ships of war; the southerly gales made it unsafe until Mr. Rennie, a great engineer, invented a way to keep the breakers outside of the harbour. He found that the action of the water had itself raised shoals of sand to a little height across the mouth of the Sound; and he thought that if rubble—rough blocks of stone some tons in weight, as well as smaller stones—were cast into the sea, the waves would arrange it in the best shape to keep out the breakers. His plan was adopted; many men were employed in quarrying, and many vessels in carrying the stone, and casting it into the sea.

The Breakwater has answered perfectly; the waves, coming in and going out, fixed the stones at the proper slope; and now, however stormy the outside sea is, the waters within the Sound are always calm.

A terrible danger to home-bound ships was the Eddystone, a narrow rock about fourteen miles from Plymouth, which is daily covered by the tide. A Mr. Winstanley, a brave gentleman of Essex, raised a lighthouse here to warn the ships of the hidden danger. It was a most difficult undertaking, for as fast as the foundations were laid at low tide, high water washed them away. The work was finished with much toil and danger, but had not stood more than a couple of years, when lighthouse and architect were engulfed during a great storm (1703). In 1757 Smeaton planned the present lighthouse. It is said he looked about for a model of perfect strength, for

some natural form which stood firm in the most furious gales; and he fixed upon the trunk of an oak, with its curve inward, and then its slight outward swell towards the top. The building is of granite, the foundations of marvellous strength; solid blocks of granite, dovetailed and clamped with irons to the rocks below and to each other.

It has stood for more than one hundred years, sending its light out a distance of fourteen miles; and the event has proved that the foundations were firmer than the very rock they were raised on. The sea has beaten against the rock beneath until it is nearly worn away; the old lighthouse must come down, and a new one is being built at a stronger point.

VI.—THE DART AND TORBAY.

The Dart, with its rapid course and sudden bends, deserves its name (which, however, is derived from the Celtic word *Dwr*, which means river). These sharp turns make it look like a chain of lakes, for bit after bit of the river seems to be shut in by land. It begins on the moor, flows, a mountain-torrent, through rocky defiles, through the ancient oak-forest of Holne Chase, past quiet Ashburton and old Totnes. The valley becomes more fair and fertile as it reaches the sea; rich meadows studded with trees, and apple-orchards border the banks of the river; and at its mouth is the ancient town of Dartmouth, with its projecting upper stories. Dartmouth fishers were among the first who went after Newfoundland cod;

and Sir Humphrey Gilbert, who took that island for Queen Elizabeth, was a Dartmouth man.

Torbay lies between the Dart valley and that of the Teign, a beautiful bay, with blood-red cliffs. Torquay is under its north headland, a pleasant bathing-place, with a mild climate, where delicate people winter. Brixham, to the south of the bay, is a fishing-town, the place of the Devon *trawlers*, who catch whiting, haddock, and other fish, in a net about seventy feet long, shaped like a bag, with a beam at the mouth, which they *trawl*, or drag along the bottom.

Most to be remembered in the history of Torbay are those July days of 1588, when the great war-ships of the Spanish Armada ventured slowly past Berry Head, while the little English ships, under the valiant 'sea-dogs' of Queen Elizabeth, dashed in and out among them, sinking one or two, disabling many, firing a broadside, and away again before the big Spaniards had time to turn round, while the English people stood in crowds, watching and praying, upon the shore.

The most famous of Elizabeth's captains were Devon men—Sir Francis Drake, who had been through Magellan's Straits for the first time, and round the world, attacking the Spaniards everywhere, Frobisher, Sir John Hawkins, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, the 'most learned and pious of them all,' and, not least, Sir Walter Raleigh, his half-brother.

Further north is Teignmouth, a large watering-place at the mouth of the Teign.

VII.—EXETER AND THE OTTER VALLEY.

Exeter, the Queen of the West, stands on the Exe. It is built upon a hill, and has hills around it. It was a British city before the Romans came, and remained a British city until the days of Athelstan, Alfred's golden-haired grandson; but he drove the Britons beyond the Tamar, and built a wall about Exeter. The Norman king, William I., took the city after a siege, and to the Normans it owes the cathedral with its two old high towers, built after the Norman fashion. The west front is covered all over with statues, figures of angels, patriarchs, saints, kings, and bishops. Outside of the city are the nursery grounds of Exeter, perhaps the largest and best known in England; the mild climate favours the growth of plants which will not thrive elsewhere.

Crediton, where shoes are made, and Tiverton, where there are lace-mills, are higher up in the Exe valley. Dawlish, in a sheltered valley, and Exmouth, on a hill, are two bathing-places near the mouth of the estuary.

The beautiful and costly Honiton lace, the manufacture for which Devonshire is most famous, is made chiefly in the Otter valley. It is a snug valley, sheltered by hills on either side, well-wooded hills, from whose tops the pink marble of Devon crops up. The cottages lie among the orchards, and the lacemakers may be seen at work at the cottage doors. This delicate fabric is made altogether by hand. The

lace-maker sits on a stool with a hard cushion on her lap; the pattern is sketched on a piece of parchment, which is laid upon the cushion; pins are put through the pattern to mark it, and the worker forms the mesh, and makes the pattern with many small bobbins, on which threads are wound, fine threads for the meshes, coarse for the pattern. Lace-making is not always pleasant work; the girls who are apprenticed to the trade often have to work in close, crowded rooms; and, though the lace is costly, it takes so long to make that the workers are not over well paid.

Lace is made in the numerous lanes which wind about Budleigh Salterton, a delightful little watering-place set in apple-orchards; in the large red village of Otterton; in Ottery St. Mary, and in most of the villages of this neighbourhood. It is sent to Honiton or to Exeter for sale. Colyton, on the Exe, is another lace-making place.

The vale of Honiton is as famous for its butter as for its lace; there and in the Exe valley the best Devonshire cream and butter are made.

SOMERSET.

I.

SOMERSET is a wide county stretching along the Bristol Channel. It is a land of hill and vale, but the vales are broader than those of Devon, and the hills do not rise out of one high moor, but are scattered in ranges here and there over the county. Somerset, the name given to this district by the Saxons, means 'the pleasant country,' and, next to Devon, it is the prettiest county in the west, has a fertile soil, and a delightful climate.

The surface of the county is greatly varied; going eastward from North Devon to Wilts, we cross Exmoor, a continuation of the North Devon moorland; the hilly country between the Quantocks and Blackdowns; the fertile hollow, or *Dean* of Taunton; the low, marshy, Somerset levels; the rugged Mendip district, and the Avon valley, in which Bath stands.

The Somerset, or, as they would call themselves, 'Zummerzet' folk are mostly farmers, and good farmers too. Many jokes are made about the way the people speak. They turn 's' into 'z' and 'f'

into 'v,' and have words which are not used in other parts of England; but many of these out-of-the-way words are real Anglo-Saxon, the language from which pure English is derived.

II.—EXMOOR.

Exmoor, with its dark hills and valleys, stretches eastward out of Devon. It is for the most part a barren tract, but some of the most beautiful country in Somerset lies on the edge of the moor, with its dark hills for a background.

East of Exmoor are the Quantock Hills, a heathery range, with a copper-mine running north from Taunton to the sea. The poets Coleridge and Wordsworth lived in this neighbourhood for a time, and delighted to wander together among the Quantocks. In the south of the county, between it and Devon, are the Blackdown Hills, upon one of which is the Wellington monument, a stone pillar raised in memory of the battle of Waterloo (1815), and put up in this place because Wellington, a red-brick town at the foot of the hills, had the honour of giving title to our great 'Iron Duke.'

The country between the Blackdowns and the Quantocks is very pretty, and Milverton, Wiveliscombe, and Combe Florey, are all pleasantly placed upon or among the hills. The parsonage of Combe Florey was the bright home of Sydney Smith and his droll little maid Bunch.

III.—TAUNTON DEAN

lies east of the Quantocks and Blackdowns. The Tone, which gives name to the vale, flows through it to join the Parret. Taunton Dean is so fertile, 'with the *zun* and the *zoil* alone, that it needs no manuring,' so the Somerset people say.

Taunton itself is the county town of West Somerset, a pleasant, sunny town, with broad streets and comfortable houses, where the rich farmers of the vale meet to sell their crops. The town stands on rising ground above the Tone, and has the ruins of an ancient castle.

About four miles from Taunton, where the Parret and Tone join, is the Isle of Athelney; not a real island in the sea, but rising ground with marshes all round it, more marshy once than it is now. This is the island to which King Alfred fled when he was driven from Chippenham by the Danes; a very good hiding-place, because only Somerset folk could make their way to it among the fens. For a whole year he lay concealed here, going out with his men every now and then to harass the Danes.

The cowherd's hut where he burnt the cakes was in Athelney, and here he may have lost a gold ornament from the heavy necklace which it was the custom of the Saxon nobles to wear. Such an ornament was picked up about two hundred years ago, after having been lost for eight centuries, and on it are these words, 'Ælfred het meh gewircan,' that is, in the English of to-day, 'Alfred had me made.'

At Athelney the king gathered his friends, and marched into Wilts to fight the great battle of Edington; and in memory of his victory he founded an abbey on the island, but no ruins of it remain.

Bridgewater stands on the Parret, about six miles from the shore. Certain tides come up as far as Bridgewater, when the tide-wave meets the waters of the river coming down in their narrow channel. For a moment neither river nor sea can get any further, and the waters rise in an upright wave, nine feet high or more. Such a wave is called a *Bore*.

The tide leaves a mixture of clay and sand in two spots by the river-side, both close to the town. In these two places there are *Bath brick* works, and though Bath bricks are used all over the world, this is the only place where they are made. The sediment left by the tide is carried up from the river, dried, cut into brick-shapes, which are sold as Bath bricks, though why they are called so nobody knows.

IV.—SOMERSET LEVELS.

Bridgewater is on the skirt of the Levels, which stretch east, along the shores of the Bristol Channel, and a long way inland, as far as the Mendips—a flat and rather dreary land, so low that the sea must be kept out by banks raised along the shore. It is so low that the water cannot drain away, and the whole district — 200 square miles — was formerly a wet morass — a marsh. But low as the land lies, the farmers have found out how to make a lower place for the waste water to run into: they have had

dykes, or *rhines* as they are called there, deep ditches to hold the water, dug across and across this low country in every direction; and some of the finest grass-fields in England are now upon land that was once marsh. A good deal of the district is, however, still undrained. The whole of this low land is new country, where was at one time an arm of the sea, and the hills which flank the Levels all round, are the high coasts of the old time.

Glastonbury is built on what are called the Avalonian Hills, which stand like islands among the marshes. The town is in the form of a cross, and grew up in the first place about the famous abbey, which, tradition says, was founded by Joseph of Arimathea. Tor Hill is on one side of the town, and on the other Weary-all Hill, where Joseph is said to have rested his *weary* limbs after his long journey from the Holy Land. Here he set his staff, minded that upon this spot his wanderings should end; and his staff sprouted and bore flowers upon Christmas Day that year, and winter after winter ever after. The old tree has been destroyed, but in the abbey-garden there is still a graft from Joseph's staff — a white thorn, which flowers at Christmas-tide. People who do not credit the story about Joseph of Arimathea, say, that perhaps the thorn was really brought from Palestine, and still keeps its foreign habits.

These old abbeys were at one time very rich, and the abbots, who ruled the monks, were grand and powerful persons. Glastonbury Abbey was perhaps

the richest in England; it was capable of entertaining five hundred visitors at one time. In those days travellers stopped at the abbeys, as they would now stop at an inn; sick folk went to the monks to be cured, beggars to be fed. But though the abbeys, or monasteries, did good in their day, Henry VIII. considered that the monks lived idle, and sometimes wicked lives; that they were not all, as they pretended to be, religious persons; and that they wasted money which might be better spent. Indeed the king thought he would like to spend some of it himself; so he overthrew the monasteries, and turned the monks adrift. Abbot Whiting, of Glastonbury, refused to give his abbey up; wherefore the king had him carried on hurdles to the top of Tor Hill, and there hung. The heavy stone Abbot's Kitchen still remains, as do the ruins of St. Joseph's chapel.

Ilchester, on the Yeo, is a poor-looking town in the marshes, about ten miles south of Glastonbury. It was the chief Roman town in this part of the country; and their great road, the Fosse Way, ran through it on the way from Bath; it is still the principal street in the town.

The Romans were famous for their wonderful roads, made in such solid fashion that they have lasted sixteen or eighteen hundred years, and are to be found in every country which was under Roman sway, in Britain among others. They were very careful to find a solid foundation for their roads, removing the loose earth, until they got to solid

rock; or, if the land were marshy, driving piles for a foundation. Then they put down a layer of stones, just large enough for the hand to grasp; then a layer of rough stones, rammed down hard, and cemented with lime; then a layer of broken bricks and pottery, also made firm with lime; the top layer was of blocks of the hardest stone, fixed carefully, so as to make a quite even surface.

In this manner the Fosse Way was made, and it is not wonderful that work so carefully done should remain as an example to the workmen of our day.

Yeovil, about five miles below Ilchester, is also on the Yeo, but it is beyond the marsh country—a handsome, busy town among hills, where the making of kid-gloves occupies the people, both in the town and in the neighbouring villages.

V.—THE MENDIP HILLS.

The Mendips are a range of hills, not more than about a thousand feet high, which runs across the country for twelve miles in a north-west direction, towards the Bristol Channel. The heights are covered with barrows, many of them of the bowl shape; but the Britons used another kind of burying-place in this district which nature had contrived for them. The hills are of limestone, and, like all limestone hills, they have many large and curious caverns, not unlike the caves we read of in the Bible. In one of these—Burrington Cavern—a strange sight was seen when first it was discovered. The mouth of the cavern opens upon a sanded floor; from the

roof of the chamber hung sparkling pendants of many strange shapes; and upon the floor there was a long line of about fifty skeletons, the bones of British warriors, who lay among the weapons they had used when living. Human bones have been found in many of these limestone caverns, which proves them to have been used by the Britons, as Abraham used the cave of Machpelah, to bury their dead out of their sight.

Cheddar Cavern is a strange, fairy-like spot, crowded with glittering figures of every shape—turkeys and monkeys, and men and trees. How these forms, the growth of ages, come to be in such caverns, is explained elsewhere.

'Cheddar Cliff' is a pass or ravine among the hills, about a mile in length. A little winding road leads through this pass, quite shut in between lofty walls of rock, dark blue precipices, shooting up into towers and pinnacles, with here and there a crack in the limestone, which gives growing room to a mountain-ash or yew. The Cheddar water rushes out from a cavern at the foot of the cliffs; it is one of the underground streams common in limestone countries.

At the mouth of the ravine is Cheddar village, with the cliffs on one side and the levels on the other. The rich grass farms of the levels supply the milk for the famous Cheddar cheeses, for which this neighbourhood has long been famous.

Wells is a quiet little city at the foot of the hills, where knitted stockings and brushes are made. It is chiefly known for its cathedral, which has nine

rows of statues—three hundred in all—upon the west front, each one as large as life, or much larger, and each standing in a little niche of his own, and many of them very beautiful. Among the curious and interesting things within the cathedral are an old clock, made by a monk of Glastonbury, round which a group of horsemen gallops every time it strikes the hour—horsemen moved by clock-work; pillars with strange fancies beautifully carved upon the capitals; on one, a man taking a thorn out of his foot; on another, a man with a bad toothache; on another, a merry face, whistling. It is a little like talking to people who have been dead for more than five hundred years, to come upon these odd fancies carved in the stones of the old cathedral.

Frome, upon the river Frome, is a very strange old town among the hills; the streets all divide into narrow paved lanes, and these divide again into narrower footpaths, which run up the hills. Hats and gloves are made here, but the cloth-mills, which stand among trees by the river-side, employ most of the people.

VI.—BATH.

Bath stands upon the steep sides of the Avon Valley, its terraces rising one behind another, to a great height. It is a handsome town, built of white Bath-stone; a fashionable watering-place, where people go to drink, and, as the name shows, to *bathe* in the mineral waters, which first made the place famous. The British prince, Bladud, was a leper, who was driven from his father's palace, and sent forth to herd

the pigs, in consequence of his loathsome disease. The pigs were leprous too, and Bladud noticed that they rolled in the warm mud about these springs, and were healed. He tried the same plan, and he, too, was cured; and when he became king, he built a city about the healing springs. So runs the legend; but perhaps the truth is, that the Romans first discovered the virtue of these waters. Certain it is that one of the chief Roman stations was built here, and the ruins of a Roman city have been found buried twenty feet deep below the present city; the remains of walls, streets, temples, and magnificent baths; for the Romans were passionately fond of bathing, and it has been said that 'there is nothing in the world which, for size and grandeur, can compare' with these Roman baths. They stood among large gardens; within were large halls for swimming and bathing; halls for lectures, for conversation; halls for manly sports. The walls within were covered with rare marbles, and adorned with pictures and statues. The Romans were accustomed to spend the whole of every afternoon in going from bath to bath, of cold, or warm, or hot water; having their bodies rubbed with oil and perfumes in the meantime, and playing between whiles at ball, or some other exercise. The modern Pump Room, where people drink the water and bathe, is a poor substitute for the beautiful Roman baths which were destroyed in the troublous times after the departure of the Romans from Britain. Clevedon and Weston-super-Mare are both sea-bathing places on the Bristol Channel.

WILTSHIRE.

I.—THE STORY OF A PIECE OF CHALK, TOLD BY ITSELF.

My first recollections are of a white, muddy sediment, hundreds of feet in thickness, stretching along the bottom of a very deep sea. Of this oozy bed I formed a part. Day and night the billows tossed and heaved above me—such a depth of water that the light scarcely found its way through. How came I and the rest of this oozy bed to lie at the bottom of the ocean?

The rivers brought much earth to the sea, and in this earth was a good deal of carbonate of lime, but in such atoms that it could not be seen, and might have floated in the water for ever without sinking to the bottom.

The sea, however, was full of tiny creatures, so small that you could have put millions of them into a school-girl's thimble. Each creature had a soft body, and feelers, with which it drew in the carbonate of lime that was held in the water, wherewith to make a wee shell for itself.

Every inch of the sea was alive with these animalculæ, everlastingly at work, separating the mineral matter. It was quite impossible to see these little workers, and yet they were there. Their lifetime was very short, rarely more than a few days. As they died they began sinking slowly through the water. The sea was always full of their shells, sinking towards the bottom, where they fell as lightly as the motes, which float in the sunbeams, drop upon the floor. Night and day they were always alighting there, forming a thin film.

Century after century passed away, and still found these dead shells accumulating, until all the figures I have heard reckoned on the black-board before me—I am now used in a school for the purposes of arithmetic—would not give any idea of their numbers, even if they were all stretched out in a row. Every time the teacher makes a figure with me he leaves thereon thousands of fossil animalculæ.

It was the gradual accumulation of these animalculic shells that formed the oozy bed at the bottom of the sea.

The extent of this mud-bed was very great, not less than scores of thousands of square miles in area. Notwithstanding the slowness of these depositions, and the infinitely minute creatures which formed it, the mud at last reached a thickness of 1500 feet. What must be the enormous number of shells contained in this mass, and the number of centuries occupied in making it, I leave you to guess.

I had lain along the bottom of this sea for thou-

sands of years, when tremors were felt to shake the sea-bottom. Soon earthquake action was at work. By-and-by we found that the water was getting shallower, and that the light came through the waves more easily. The sea-bottom was being up-raised, and at length, what had formerly been ocean became a mud flat. The sea was drained off, and covered land, which had sunk as ours had risen, and thus the two changed places.

The upheaval went on, and the chalk hardened into its present solid state, and became a land surface. This upheaval was exceedingly slow. The exact spot where I was born was at hundreds of yards depth of sea-water, and the upheaving process was probably not at a greater rate than a few feet in a century.

When I did appear above the sea, it was to form part of a chalky mud flat. Far as the eye could see this monotonous landscape stretched away. The pasty mud hardened in the hot sunshine—for England was as hot as India in those days.

At first, the new-born chalk was quite bare, but at length, by means of wind and rain, and in other ways, which we cannot stop to consider, a mould was formed ; plants grew, animals came, and a great chalk continent stretched across what is now Europe—from the west of Ireland right through Russia. It has not taken me long to tell of the changes which were thus wrought, but it required hundreds of thousands of years to produce them.*

There have been many changes since: new oceans,

* Condensed from Dr. Taylor's *Geological Stories.*

seas, lakes, and rivers. In many places the chalk continent has been quite washed away, or heaved apart, so as to show the older rock upon which the chalk was laid. Where pieces of this continent still exist, it is no longer a flat plain, but has been weather-worn into rounded hills and valleys; and the land is so covered with close short grass, or with soil producing various crops, that, to see the chalk, we must dig deep, or go to where the sea has worn every covering off the white cliffs which border it.

II.—SALISBURY PLAIN AND STONEHENGE.

This story of the chalk is the history of a large piece of England—one fragment of the great chalk continent—which includes most of that corner of the country east of a line drawn from the east of the Wash to Portland Bill.

The greater part of Wiltshire belongs to the chalk country. Inkpen Beacon, over a thousand feet high, the highest of the chalk hills, rises just where Wiltshire, Hampshire, and Berkshire join.

From this point four ranges of chalk hills branch out: the Chiltern Hills, and, joining them, the East Anglian Heights, which reach the coast of Norfolk, by the Wash; the North Downs of Surrey, the South Downs of Sussex, and the Downs of Dorset.

Salisbury Plain, in the south of Wilts, is in the very heart of the chalk country: it is a great stretch of rather barren land, twenty miles long and fifteen broad, which heaves and swells with its chalky waves,

like the ocean heaving after a storm : chalky, but the chalk is well hidden by the sweet, short grass, which feeds countless flocks of sheep, each attended by its own shepherd. The people of the Plain have always been shepherd-folk, used to lonely wanderings among the deep valleys and over the smooth downs, bare of trees, where a keen, sweet wind is always blowing : 'Wild are the walks on these lonely downs.' Upon this wild plain, strange, out-of-the-way sights are to be seen. There are huge mounds, or hills, whose regular shape shows they have been raised by man : some are long, some bowl-shaped, some the shape of a bell. What are these? and why should men have undertaken such laborious works? They speak of love and honour for the dead : each *barrow*—so they are called—is a sepulchral mound, raised, perhaps, 2000 years ago by loving hands.

Many of these barrows have been opened, and each was found to contain a stone chest or coffin. Within one of these chests was the skeleton of a child, clasped in its mother's arms ; in another, a hunter, with his faithful dog ; another held a warrior, laid among his weapons ; and in one was a maiden, still decked with her beads and trinkets. These are relics of a people who have nearly passed away—the Britons, the first inhabitants of our country about whom anything is known.

Upon the plain, too, some ten miles north of Salisbury, is another mighty relic of these people : the great temple of Stonehenge. No one has found out exactly what was the purpose of this and of a few

other huge stone circles, which remain to us from these old days. They may have been courts where offenders were tried and laws were made. But most antiquarians think they were vast temples, open to the heavens, open, too, on all sides, in which the Druid priests performed their rites, and watched the movements of sun and stars : for they believed that peace or war, death or life, depended upon changes in the position of the heavenly bodies.

Stonehenge, when perfect, consisted of two complete and of two imperfect circles, one circle within another, with a bank and ditch round the whole. The outer circle was formed of huge, upright stones, set about a yard apart, connected by other stones laid on the top of these, so as to make a circle, about sixteen feet from the ground. These blocks were all squared and cleverly joined together. There were thirty upright stones in the outer circle. The stones of the inner circle were much smaller, and were blocks of granite which may have been brought from Devon. Within this again was a higher structure, blocks twenty-five feet high, and within this stood nineteen granite posts.

But Stonehenge has been spoiled ; the blocks have been thrown down or carried away, and now there is little but a shapeless pile of huge, moss-covered stones. Around the site of the temple is a circle of barrows, known as the Old King Barrows.

There is a delightful legend about the raising of Stonehenge. Hengist, the Saxon, summoned the British king, Vortigern, to a conference on Salisbury

Plain, and there treacherously slew him and 300 of his nobles. The king who came after Vortigern resolved to raise a monument which should keep this shameful deed in memory.

He summoned the enchanter, Merlin, to his aid. Merlin told him of a great stone circle in Ireland, which had been brought out of Africa by giants. The king ordered the enchanter to bring it to England, and set it up on Salisbury Plain. He filled his caldron, muttered his spells, and the stones came floating over the sea, and marched through the land, and set themselves up upon Salisbury Plain, where they may be seen to this day.

To the north of Salisbury Plain are the Marlborough Downs, very like the Plain itself; and not far from the town of Marlborough, which is chiefly remarkable for its college, is Avebury.

This is an older Druid temple than even Stonehenge. The outer circle consists of one hundred enormous stones, placed at a distance of nine yards from one another; within this are two smaller circles. Avebury is sometimes called the Serpent Temple, because there are two stone avenues leading up to it, which give it a serpent-like form.

Not far from Avebury is Silbury Hill: a marvellous hill, truly, for it is not one of Nature's making; but is most probably a barrow, and it is 135 feet high and 500 feet round at the base. People who understand such things, know how much human labour must have gone to raise this great pile.

To return to the Plain; the small stone circles

upon which were raised the round huts of British villages may be traced on the sides of the hills; not in the valleys; these were probably marshy, and apt to give the people ague.

British roads run up hill and down dale, and, below them, the level, well-made roads of the Romans; for the city of Old Sarum, not far from Stonehenge was one of the chief Roman strongholds in the land, from which roads led in every direction. Until the thirteenth century, Sarum was one of the chief cities in England: a busy, handsome town, with many people and many buildings; now, there is no trace of it left, and the plough is driven over its once crowded streets.

III.—KING ALFRED AND CHIPPENHAM.

A great deal of 'English history' has taken place in Wilts. After the departure of the Romans, the Britons made a fierce struggle here against the invading Saxons, and this county was the last addition to the Saxon kingdom of Wessex.

But Wiltshire is interesting chiefly as having been the scene of much of the life of Alfred the Great—great because he was brave, and good, and loving to his people. At Chippenham he held his court, and here, perhaps, it was he had the candle painted to divide his busy day, and had curtains hung that it might not be put out by the wind which swept through the unplastered walls of his palace. Here he was attended by his palace-school, where he and his

courtiers sought knowledge at the lips of the learned men he had brought into England.

But the marauding Danes came, and drove him, after a brave struggle, from his Chippenham palace into the wilds of Somerset. The Danes took possession of his house, and made the town their camp.

Then follows the story of how Alfred gathered his friends together, visited the Danish camp dressed as a harper, amused the Danes with songs, and took note of their riot and disorder. Then he went back for his friends, marched through Wilts at their head, was met by the Danes at the field of Edington, about ten miles south of Chippenham, and there he defeated them with great slaughter, and drove them back to their camp, which he took after a siege of fourteen days. And then Alfred made merciful terms with the Danes, and allowed them to remain in the northern parts of England, which they had conquered, upon certain conditions; after which the king once more set up his court at Chippenham, and for ten years of peace devoted himself to the care of his dear people of Wessex.

There is a figure of a huge white horse scored into the chalk on the side of a hill close to the field of battle, which is said to be a memorial of Alfred's victory. The white horse was the Saxon standard.

Chippenham is now a busy town on the Avon, which is here a clear, winding stream working many cloth and silk-mills. Its cloth received the first prize in the Great Exhibition. Chippenham has the largest cheese-market in England.

Wilton, too, a little quiet town near Salisbury, was the scene of two fierce battles in which Alfred defeated the Danes in 871. But they had their revenge, for in 1003 they came under Sweyn, and burnt the place to the ground. Wilton is a very old town, once the capital of the Saxon kingdom of Wessex, and from it Wiltshire takes its name. It is now chiefly known for its carpets, which were first made in England at this town.

IV.—SALISBURY AND THE CATHEDRAL.

Salisbury itself is comparatively a new town, built in the thirteenth century, when the Cathedral was founded, an event which proved the ruin of Old Sarum; for the inhabitants followed the Cathedral, and went to live in the new town: hitherto they had had a cathedral in their own old city. The town is very regular and airy, because, before the buildings were begun, the ground was divided into squares, or chequers as they are called, round which the houses are built, leaving a space in the middle for yards or gardens.

The Cathedral is the pride of Salisbury. It stands in an open lawn, with trees about it, and is perfectly beautiful in its lightness and grace—a queen among cathedrals. The spire is the tallest in England—four hundred feet from the pavement—and is greatly admired for the way in which, without break or bulge anywhere, it gradually tapers towards the sky. Unlike other English cathedrals, Salisbury was all built

at one time—finished in about thirty-five years. Salisbury stands upon the Avon, where it is joined by three smaller streams.

Clarendon, about two miles from Salisbury, is now a gentleman's seat, but was formerly a royal palace with a forest about it. It was a favourite residence of all our kings from Henry I. to Edward III., and here were drawn up the Constitutions of Clarendon in the reign of Henry II.

V.

The great manufacture of Wiltshire is the famous west country broadcloth. The woollen manufacture is mostly carried on in pleasant situations, where there are hills and valleys, because the streams which water the valleys are required in the first and last processes of the manufacture. Thus the clothing towns of Wilts—Bradford, Chippenham, Trowbridge, Westbury, and Melksham—are all on the Avon itself, or on one of the streams flowing into it.

Trowbridge is an old irregular town on a rocky hill, which first made cloth in the reign of Henry VIII.

Bradford is rather going down as a clothing town. Few of its numerous factories are now at work. It is a large town, built in the hollow of the Avon valley, with hills all round.

Devizes, in North Wilts, has also some cloth-works. It is an old town, with a Norman castle, chiefly known for its large corn-market, for it stands

in a corn-growing part of the county. North Wilts crossed by the upper part of the Thames, is a fertile plain, with corn-fields and rich pastures, where the cows feed from whose milk the Wiltshire cheeses are made. The excellent Wiltshire bacon, too, is provided from the pigs fed upon this northern plain.

We can only mention two more of the interesting things in Wiltshire—the Wansdyke, an earthen mound stretching across the county, which is supposed to have been made by an ancient British people as a defence against their neighbours (for in those days everybody was obliged to take care of his own); and Box Tunnel, the most remarkable modern piece of work in the county, a tunnel through a hill a mile and three-quarters in length, and in some places more than three hundred feet below the surface.

Wiltshire has two Avon rivers—the Lower Avon, which goes into Bristol Channel, and the Salisbury Avon. Avon is the old British name, and just means waters, so that it is a suitable name for any river. There are, indeed, fourteen Avon rivers in Great Britain.

DORSETSHIRE.

I.

DORSETSHIRE is a chalk county, the greater part of it being filled with the two chalk ranges which leave Salisbury Plain. The North Downs, a range from ten to twenty miles broad, runs across the county from east to west. In this hilly district there are not many towns, and not many people, but rolling downs covered with close turf, upon which large flocks of sheep are fed. The South Downs, which run near the coast, are a narrow range not more than two or three miles in breadth.

Between the Downs is a sandy waste, covered with purple heather, barren and forsaken, which has the chalk hills on each side of it, north and south, and reaches from Poole to Dorchester—a waste yielding nothing but blue potter's clay, which is dug from many pits, and sent to the Staffordshire potteries.

Dorsetshire is a poor county, and the villages have a rather forlorn look; still there is some good pasture-land, upon which cattle are reared, and Dorset butter is very well known.

The Romans had several towns in Dorsetshire, Dorchester, the present county town, being their chief station in the county. It stands upon a hill, and the old Roman roads are still its highways.

Sherborne, at the north of the county, is another interesting town, with a beautiful old abbey church. It was famous among the Saxons, and Asser, the wise and gentle friend of Alfred the Great, was its bishop. The chief business of the town now is silk-throwing, for which there are three factories. Sherborne Castle, which stands on the hills above the town, was given by Elizabeth to Sir Walter Raleigh. He did not live in the castle, but built for himself and his dear wife 'a most fine house, beautified with orchards, gardens, and groves of much delight'—much delight to him, for he took great pleasure in gardening.

Shaftesbury, perched high up on a narrow ridge of cliff, is another old town; indeed, it is one of the oldest in the kingdom, said to have been founded by King Lud, 1000 B.C. But King Lud and his doings are only matters of story.

Not far from the town is the Vale of Blackmoor, a wide level with rich pasture-lands, which feed many herds of cattle and great droves of pigs. From these Blackmoor pigs is obtained much of the bacon eaten in London.

Parts of the coast are very beautiful. There is Lulworth Cove, a little round basin shut in by high chalk hills, and Lyme Regis, set in a deep combe, with black precipices and broken crags round it. The

cliffs of Lyme Regis are full of wonderful things, the stony skeletons of huge reptiles which basked in the warm mud of the river-estuaries many, many thousand years ago, when the reptiles had the world pretty much to themselves. A little girl of ten found an ichthyosaurus in the cliff; the specimen is now in the British Museum. It is a huge sea-lizard, something like a fish, measuring eight yards from the head to the point of the tail.

The most interesting parts of the coast are the islands of Purbeck and Portland, neither of which is an island in fact.

II.—THE ISLE OF PURBECK.

Purbeck is bounded on one side by Poole Harbour, a beautiful estuary, which looks like an inland lake at high water, because the heaths reach down to the shore, and the waters branch into them in every direction.

Brownsea Island, in the Harbour, is hilly, and covered with fir-woods, and with a thick layer of potter's clay in the interior.

Poole itself is an old red-brick town, with large quays full of shipping, for it trades with Newfoundland and other distant lands, getting timber and corn and sending out potter's clay and clothing, chiefly linen shirts, which are made in the town.

Poole Harbour is the estuary of the river Frome, which gives to Purbeck the appearance of an island. It really is a peninsula, about fourteen miles long,

with the Frome and the harbour on the North, the sea east and south, and on the west a little river which rises near Lulworth and joins the Frome. There is no water to divide it from the land about Lulworth.

Purbeck is, for the most part, a heathy moor, crossed by a range of chalk hills, which shut it in upon the north like a wall. Along the east coast many quarries of Purbeck stone are worked—a hard close stone, used a good deal in making London pavements. The top layer of this stone is the Purbeck marble, a beautiful stone, used in the pillars and fonts of churches, which has a curious history. It is made almost entirely of the shells of a little river snail, very much the sort of snail that is to be found in river-beds now, cemented with lime. These little snails lived many ages ago, and in their time there must have been either a fresh water lake or a broad estuary where Purbeck Isle is now.

There is a gap in the wall of chalk hills which borders Purbeck on the north, and in this gap stands Corfe Castle, with its rock-like towers—the key of the island. It is chiefly famous for the way in which the brave Lady Banks held it for the king during a six weeks' siege in the civil war. First the enemy tried to take the castle by a trick; some of their soldiers attempted to ride in with other gentlemen on the occasion of a grand hunt, but Lady Banks was on the watch, and had the gates locked. Then they sent forty seamen to scale the walls, but the lady and her five servants mounted three or four small guns on the

walls, and frightened the sailors away. Then by beat of drum she called her tenants and friends to her help; whereupon the enemy tried to starve the defenders out. They proclaimed that no bread, nor beef, nor other provision should be sold for the use of the Lady Banks, and they kept a strict watch that no messengers should pass into, or out of, the castle. To escape this danger the wise lady gave up her four little guns, and the enemy, thinking there was no more danger, ceased to watch, and left her in peace for a time.

While her foes were thus careless the lady got provisions, and powder, and friends into the castle, and was quite ready for them when they came with cannon and six hundred men, all of whom had vowed to kill without mercy men, women, and children when the fort surrendered. But the assailants were cowardly, and the lady and her people were very brave. They heaved down a constant stream of stones and hot embers, and so kept the enemy from climbing the ladders. At last news came that the king's forces were near. The assailants fled, and the noble lady was relieved. (1643.)

The name of another lady is connected with Corfe Castle, a lady of evil fame. An old chronicler tells the story thus :—

'King Edward being hunting in a forest neare the sea, upon the south-east coast of the countie of Dorset, and in the Isle of Purbecke, came neare unto a fair and stronge castell, seated on a little river called Corfe, wherein his mother-in-law, Elfrida, with her

sonne, Ethelred, then lived: the king, ever bearing a kinde affection to them, being soe neare, would needs make knowne soe much by his personnall visitation; which having resolved, and being singled from his followers, hee rode to the castell gate.

'The queene, who long had looked for an opportunitie, that, by making him awaye, she might make waye for her own sonne to the crowne, was glad the occasion now offered itselfe; and therefore, with a modest and humble behaviour, she bade him welcome, desiringe to enjoy his presence that night.

'But hee, having performed what hee purposed, and doubting his companie might find him missing, told her that he now intended on horseback to drink to her and his brother in a cuppe of wine, and soe leave her; which, being presented unto him, the cuppe was no sooner at his mouth, but a knife was at his back, which a servant, appointed by this treacherous woman, stroke into him. The kinge, finding himselfe hurt, sett spurs to his horse, thinking to recover his companie; but the wounde being deepe, and fainting through the losse of much blood, he felle from his horse, which dragged him by one foot hanging in the stirrup, until he was left dead at Corfe Gate, Anno Dom. 979.'

III.—PORTLAND ISLE.

Portland Isle is a rocky peninsula jutting out into the Channel, shaped something like the beak of a bird; hence it is called the Bill of Portland. The

island is famous for its building stone. There are perhaps one hundred quarries, with about six men and two boys to work each, and the great heaps of waste stone have been used for several years to make a breakwater on the plan of that at Plymouth. Some fifteen hundred men were employed about this breakwater, who marched to and from their work in dull-looking gangs—men who never spoke to, rarely looked at one another, and who never dared to stop their work; men with hard-looking, heavy faces for the most part, wearing the same sort of clothes, with the same badge. These men were the convicts from the large and dreary convict prison upon the island.

It is not quite right to call Portland an island. It is tied by a sort of string to the mainland, about ten miles off—a string which keeps close to the shore, leaving space for a narrow channel called the Fleet.

This string is the Chesil Bank, a great curiosity, the origin of which nobody can explain. It is a ridge of shingle, about two hundred yards across, with a steep slope to the water on each side. The pebbles of which it is made get larger and larger from west to east, and they are of such different colours that the Portlanders say there is a prize of 50*l.* for any one who shall find two stones alike.

HAMPSHIRE.

I.

A PLEASANT county is Hampshire; warm and woody, with forests and green hills, breezy commons, waving corn-fields, and hop-gardens, and a coast of the most curious shape, with narrow openings running far into the land. It has the honour of sending three tributary streams to Father Thames,—

> 'The Kennet swift, for silver eels renowned;
> The Loddon slow, with verdant alders crowned:'

both of which bring their waters from the North Downs;

> 'And chalky Wey, that rolls a milky wave,'

which rises in the Alton Hills.

Well may the Wey be chalky, for Hampshire is a chalk county; the round, swelling South Downs come straight from Salisbury Plain, run across the county south of Winchester, and enter Sussex on the east. The North Downs run from Inkpen Beacon, where the three counties join, across North Hants, almost in a line with the South Downs; and these two are connected by the Alton Hills, another chalk range.

Like all the chalk hills, these Downs are well dotted with sheep, for, short as is the grass upon their smooth slopes, it is sweet and tender, and makes famous mutton.

There are various interesting places among, or near, the North Downs. Kingsclere, a little country town, has seen better days, for here was once a royal palace. Three or four miles off, is Silchester, which, as the 'chester' in its name shows, was once a Roman camp. The ruins of the old city walls remain, broad old walls, on the top of which a thick grove is growing now. Within the walls there is no longer any sign of streets or palaces, houses or temples; nothing but waving corn. And yet there is a sign; in places, the corn grows thin—in straight lines, running north and south, east and west. These thin places look just the width of streets, like so many streets of thin corn; that is exactly what they are; they are the streets of the old Roman city, upon which the soil is not yet deep enough for the corn to thrive.

Many Roman remains have been dug up within these old walls; one, a beautiful little bronze object, not much longer than your hand, told a long story to the gentleman who found it. Could it speak? you say. Not exactly; but it told of a fight in which the Romans were beaten—of a brave standard-bearer who cared more for the honour of Rome than for his own life. It was a Roman eagle; such an eagle as was carried on a pole or staff before each divison of the Roman army. This eagle was found among some burnt house timbers, and the standard-bearer who

carried it must have broken it off its staff and hidden it away in the roof of a house, that it might not fall into British hands, before he thought of flying for his life.

Close by Silchester is Strathfield-Saye, an estate which the country gave to our great Duke of Wellington, who did more for the honour of England than ever Roman did for Rome. It is not a very fine place, but there are some great cedars of Lebanon, and some other magnificent trees in the park.

Taking the road south to the Downs again, we come to Basingstoke, a well-to-do town in a pleasant spot; a town that has been well-to-do since the days of the Conqueror. Close by it is Old Basing, to which, also, belongs the story of a brave deed.

II.—THE SIEGE OF BASING HOUSE.

Here the Danes were beaten in a great battle by Alfred and his brother Ethelred, while the latter was king; and here stood Basing House,—a very splendid mansion, full of the most costly furnishings, and beautiful ornaments, and gold and silver plate, belonging to the Marquis of Winchester. John Paulet, the fifth marquis, loved Charles I. better than lands or gold; and when the Civil War broke out, Basing House held out for the king.

The old marquis gathered his friends within, made fast all weak places, set cannon to fire from the walls upon the enemy, and made the place so strong that for two whole years it was held against the besiegers.

The soldiers of the Parliament surrounded the house so that nobody could get out or in, and every now and then the shot from their great guns came thundering against the walls, huge cannon-balls that would have thrown them down had they not been very strong. Three times within nine days did Sir William Waller, the general in command, try to take the house in this way; but he was repulsed, and many of his men slain, by the firing from within. Then another detachment came to the help of the besiegers, and before they made a fresh attack, they summoned the marquis, with blast of trumpet, to give up his house. The noble answer was, 'If the king had no more ground in England than Basing House, I would maintain it to the uttermost.' Soon 'the uttermost' seemed near. Cannon-balls failed to break down the walls; fast as men fell at their posts within, others stood in the dangerous places; but every day food grew more scarce; a meal a-day, almost a bite a-day, must suffice these brave men; for the army without kept strict watch night and day, and would let no provisions be carried in.

At last they were able to send a messenger to Oxford, where the king was. One brave gentleman, Colonel Gage, said he would carry provisions to Basing House; and, though some of his men were killed, and many wounded, in making their way through the besiegers, he did succeed in taking food to the starving household.

Still Basing House held out for the king; but after it had been beleaguered for two whole years,

Cromwell and his Ironsides, the men who never were beaten, marched down on the unhappy house. They placed their cannon so as to batter down the weak places. At six o'clock in the morning a signal was fired, and then the storming began. Holes, or breaches, were made in the walls; Cromwell's men set up ladders, and got in through these holes, cutting their way through the bodies of the defenders.

A terrible scene followed; the fierce soldiers, in their search for plunder, burst in upon the few ladies and aged men. One young lady could not keep from words of scorn and anger when she saw them use her old father hardly. The Ironsides did not forgive her; her dead body was found among those of the hundred men who fell in trying to save the house. Her two sisters and six or seven other ladies escaped, and so did the marquis; but all his precious things were carried off, and his house was burnt down by the pitiless Ironsides.

Still among the Downs, further east, is the pleasant old town of Odiham, with its ruined castle, in which King David of Scotland was confined for seven years after the battle of Neville's Cross.

Aldershot, famous for the great camp—with its rows and rows of soldiers' huts; with its drill, and red coats, and bugle-calls—lies among the heaths and commons of the north-east corner. The road south from the camp passes through Farnham to Alton, a most pleasant woody country, with here and there hop-gardens stretching on each side of the way; for

hops are grown in East Hants, and 'pickers' swarm here much as they do in Kent.

Alton is a rather busy brewing town, with the Alton Hills running south from it. Just at the foot of the hills, and close on the borders of Woolmer Forest, is Selborne, which has had the story of its birds and other creatures written by the loving hand of Gilbert White, in the *Natural History of Selborne*. All East Hants is woody country; there is Holt Forest, and Woolmer Forest, and Bere Forest; but these are only bits of the great forest that at one time stretched far into the county on the Sussex side, the great Wealden Forest of former times. This part of Hampshire belongs to the Sussex Weald.

III.—THE COAST.

A curious, crinkly coast, have the Channel waters made for Hampshire, except on the bit of cliff-coast between Bournemouth and Hurst Castle, where the sea has not been able to make much way.

The shingle bar on which Hurst Castle stands, is a low, narrow tongue of land, projecting towards Clevesend Point in the Isle of Wight. It consists of rounded flints and other pebbles, derived from the waste of the cliffs to the west, and forms a barren causeway, about a mile long, seventy yards broad, and twelve feet high. In the great storm of 1824, the bank was moved bodily forward for forty yards towards the north-east. Hurst Castle stands at the end of the bar. It was built in the reign of Henry VIII., and was one of the prisons of Charles I.

East of Hurst Castle, the coast is everywhere broken by inlets, and islands, and harbours, and queer little peninsulas. The land lies low, and into the lowest places the sea makes its way, sometimes cutting off bits of land from the rest, and making islands of them.

Hayling Island is one of these, and to the north of it the water is so shallow that the railway from Havant goes right across. So it does to Portsea, close to Hayling on the west. Close as the two islands lie, they are very unlike in character. Hayling is a quiet, sandy bathing-place; Portsea is very different; the water on the west of it is a beautiful deep harbour, with a narrow opening, deep enough for the largest war-ships; and on the island is the great town of Portsmouth, with its parts—Portsea and Landport, Kingston and Southsea.

A very strong place is Portsmouth, with towers and batteries which command the Channel, and with earthworks to protect it on the land side. There is a royal dockyard at Portsea, the largest in England, where many of our war-ships are built, and where the ships come to get stores of salt-beef and biscuit, clothes, and whatever else they may want for a long voyage. Here, too, the men-of-war lie by when there is no war going on in which they are wanted; as many as a thousand might lie at anchor in Spithead, the channel between Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight, a safe and sheltered spot.

All these ships and sailors keep Portsmouth very busy; the ships must be stored and the men fed, so smaller vessels are constantly bringing in eggs and

butter, corn and cattle, sheep and coal, as well as iron and timber to make new ships.

Gosport, on the other side of the harbour, is as busy as Portsmouth, of which it is really a part, and a floating bridge, or ferry, goes across between the two places every half-hour. The grey ruins of Porchester Castle stand at the north end of the harbour; and Haslar Hospital, for sick sailors, is on a tongue of land at the south.

IV.—THE ISLAND.

So south-country people call the Isle of Wight, as if there were only one island in the world. But then our Queen spends a great deal of time there, at Osborne, in the north of the island, close by the little River Medina: here the Queen lived when she was the young Princess Victoria, and perhaps she loves the present Osborne House because it was planned by the Prince Consort.

> 'Of all the Southern isles she holds the highest place,
> And evermore hath been the great'st in Britain's grace.'

And well does the green island deserve 'Britain's grace,' with her pretty houses nestling among trees like primroses among their leaves, and her delightful winding lanes over-arched with green boughs, her pleasant hills and quiet valleys. A range of chalk hills goes through the middle of the island, stretching from near the Foreland to the Needles, and there is also St. Catharine's Hill (800 feet) in the south, the

highest point in the whole island, with 'a stern round tower of other days' on its summit, which one Lord Walter built many centuries ago to be a light tower for the safety of the seamen in dark and stormy weather. Just below it, on the coast, the beautiful Undercliff begins. This is a strip of the shore about six miles long and from a quarter to half-a-mile wide, remarkable for its wildly broken surface. Being sheltered by the hills from the cold north winds, myrtles, and geraniums, and other delicate plants, endure the mild winter here in the open air.

The whole south coast of the island is interesting and beautiful. There are towering cliffs, upon the ledges of which the sea-fowl swarm, with caves which the ocean has worn at their base; there are rocks, arched, needle-shaped, and of many strange forms; and there are the romantic *chines*. These are narrow chasms, cut and torn in the strangest way. They seem to have been formed in the course of ages by the streams which descend through them from the high lands to the sea, and which swell into strong torrents after heavy rains.

It seems as if the cliff had been broken, torn apart here and there, leaving narrow valleys or glens, with steep rock walls on each side. Steep as the rocks are, trees have found room to grow, and all the way up to the top, the sides of the chines are covered with flowering plants, and trees, and ferns. Conceive a rill making music among the ferns and grasses at the bottom, and you will be able to imagine what fairy dells many of these chines are. They are

CARISBROOKE CASTLE.

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the passes by which the islanders get to the south coast.

Part of the cliff has been broken down in places to make room for villages for the visitors. Ventnor, and beautiful Bonchurch, and Shanklin, are favourite places.

The boldest part of the coast line is, however, on the western side of the island, where the steep cliffs rise six hundred feet above the sea, and are the loftiest on the shores of England. The five columns of rock, each standing up by itself, called the Needles, lie off the narrow west point. Only three of them now rise much out of the water.

On the west, too, is Alum Bay, with its strangely-striped cliffs on one side—purple, blue, yellow, grey, black—shining out clear and bright as the streaks of a tulip, especially after rain ; on the other side of the bay are cliffs of pure white chalk.

The north coast upon the Solent is flat ; the part of the Channel between Hants and the island is called Spithead on the east, and the Solent on the west, and gay the Solent often is with the bright little yachts of the Cowes Yachting Club, that skim the water like gulls with their white, winglike sails.

V.—THE ROYAL PRISONERS.

Nor is the island without its stories, the most interesting of which belong to Carisbrooke Castle, close by Newport. Here Charles I. came, hoping to find a friend when he fled from Hampton Court. He

and his two faithful servants rode all night in search of a safe place, and at daybreak they found themselves in the New Forest. They were not safe there, so Carisbrooke Castle was thought of, because the governor, Colonel Hammond, was the nephew of Dr. Hammond, who was the king's chaplain and dear friend.

At first the governor was kind, and allowed the king's friends to visit him. But Colonel Hammond was really the servant of the Parliament, and orders came shortly that he must keep the king a close prisoner. He was allowed to walk upon the ramparts of the grey old castle, which he did every morning, but most of his time was spent in reading. More than once his friends planned his escape, and on one occasion he nearly got away. The window of his prison was very narrow, but King Charles thought because he could get his head through, he should be able to work out his whole body. So his friends brought a vessel to carry him over sea, and a horse to bear him to the sea-side, and a rope by which he might slip to the ground, and then they threw a pebble against the window to show that all was ready. The poor king was to be disappointed. He got his head through, but the opening was too narrow for his shoulders; he was fast, and could not move either way, and his friends below heard him groan, but were unable to help him. At last he succeeded in drawing in his head, and he set a candle in the window to show his friends the attempt had failed.

For a whole year he was a prisoner in Carisbrooke

Castle, and thence was carried to Hurst Castle, opposite the island. After six weeks he was taken from here to his unseemly death at his own palace of Whitehall. It is pleasant to know that all the time the king was a prisoner he found much happiness in thoughts about good things, and in one or two good books which were dear to him.

The Princess Elizabeth could not get over the sorrow of her father's death. She and her young brother Henry, Duke of Gloucester, had been allowed to see the king and receive his blessing, and he had given a Bible to his dear daughter Elizabeth as his parting gift. After that, the young prince and princess were brought to Carisbrooke Castle. No person was allowed to kiss their hands, and the duke was called Master Harry instead of by his title, but they were not hardly used. But the gentle princess pined; then she caught cold after a wetting, and being but weakly, she kept her bed. It happened that the servants, thinking she was asleep, had left the room for awhile. They came back, and thought she was still sleeping—that she had fallen asleep while saying her prayers, for her hands were clasped on an open Bible, her beloved father's last gift. She was indeed asleep, but was never more to wake a prisoned maiden. She had gone to her father and to the freedom of the heavenly home.

In the church at Newport is a beautiful marble monument; the princess is lying on a mattress, with her cheek on an open Bible, which bears the words, 'Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy

laden, and I will give you rest.' She lies within an iron grating, the bars of which are broken to show that by death she had escaped from prison. The words on the monument are, 'To the Memory of the Princess Elizabeth, daughter of Charles I., who died at Carisbrooke Castle on Sunday, September 8, 1650, and is interred beneath the chancel of this church. This monument is erected, a token of respect for her virtues, and of sympathy for her misfortunes, by Victoria R., 1856.'

VI.—INTO HAMPSHIRE AGAIN.

This time up Southampton Water, through the opening guarded by Calshot Castle. We must stop to look at Netley Abbey, by the water's edge, on the right. It is a ruin, only the bare walls left, and trees as well as ivy have taken root even on these. It stands on a little hill which rises from the bank of Southampton Water, and the thick clumps of oak about it and the waving branches of the trees rooted in its walls, which nearly hide the grey ruins, and the gleaming water beyond, make altogether a delightful picture.

Southampton lies a little way beyond the abbey, at the mouth of the Itchen. It was once a strong town, with towers, and wall, and gates. But now only one gate remains, an arch, above which are the figures of Sir Bevis of Hampton (Southampton) and the giant Ascapard, whom he slew in fight.

Upon Southampton Water Canute taught his

courtiers a wise lesson. They flattered the king, and said that all power on sea and land belonged to him. So he commanded his throne to be brought and set on the sands; then said he to the ocean, 'Thou art my kingdom, and the dry land is also mine; rise not, obey my commands.' But the swelling tide came in, and the waves rolled over his feet. Then he turned to his courtiers, and bade them give such praise to Him alone who reigns above. Thereupon the king took off his crown, and laid it in the minster of Winchester, and never wore it more. Southampton, which once gave its name to the whole county, is a busy place, for it is from here that all the great P. and O. (Peninsular and Oriental) steamers start. Letters, or parcels, or people bound for India, or for the West Indies, or for some parts of the Continent, are all brought to Southampton to be shipped, and people who have been long away from home are glad enough to steam into Southampton Water again.

Other steamers besides the P. and O. make Southampton their head-quarters, and there is much trade, chiefly in gold and jewels, silks and velvets, and other things which, because they are precious, are carried in these beautiful vessels.

And now to get to Winchester; we may walk straight up by the road, or by the reedy banks of the Itchen; or, better still, for most of the way we may take paths through the woods, chiefly pleasant-smelling pine-woods. We shall not go by rail, for we must stop more than once on the way. First, there is Otterbourne, a lovely village at the foot of a hill,

where Miss Yonge lives, who has put so many pleasant people into her books for us to know nearly as well as we know our own relations. Miss Yonge has had the village church made beautiful with the money which she received for *Daisy Chain*, so that it speaks of the pleasure of many people in the delightful story.

Turning out of the road a little, we come to Hursley, whose pretty church and vicarage are dear to many who care about the best things. For this is the church and the home of the good Dr. Keble, who wrote 'Sun of my soul,' and a beautiful hymn for every Sunday in the year, all of which are to be read in the *Christian Year*.

Taking the Winchester road again, or rather, keeping on the chalk downs through which the road is cut, we soon come in sight of the grand old Minster—the king among cathedrals, as Salisbury is the queen.

Before we reach Winchester we pass the old Hospital of St. Cross, founded centuries ago by the brother of King Stephen, who left money to give bread and ale to any traveller who should come to the gate and ask for it. To this day the dole is given away. Within the gate is a court, with the pretty gardens of the thirteen old men, the brethren of the hospital; and all round this square court are buildings, the row of little old houses for the brethren on one side; on another, the master's house, and the eating-hall, where they sit at meat; and, on another, the beautiful church with its pictured windows. Very

pretty and peaceful it all looks, lying amid green meadows from which rise fine old trees.

VII.—THE ROYAL CITY.

Winchester, the county town of Hants, is a pleasant city; there is a warm, comfortable look about its red brick houses, many of them with gable-ends and overhanging stories. It has nice shops, and a beautiful old market cross of carved stone; it has the great Minster and the old College; and, above all, it has a long, long history, which reaches back to the days of King Lucius, the first Christian king in Britain, or any other country; and he it was who built the first minster, very large and grand.

Then came the pagan Romans, and after them the Saxons. The Saxons made Winchester their royal city, where was the palace of their kings; and they, too, built a beautiful minster. Perhaps in this minster St. Swithin taught the young Prince Alfred to be a brave and holy boy—such a boy as should grow up into a good and great king.

In time the Danes came, and King Canute lived in his Winchester palace, and laid by his crown on the minster altar. By-and-by, when there were Norman kings in the land, they, too, made their homes in the royal city, and wore their crowns there upon the great feast days.

The Conqueror's cousin, good Bishop Walkelyn, set his heart upon building a new minster, more splendid than any that had been before, for the Normans did not think much of the Saxon churches.

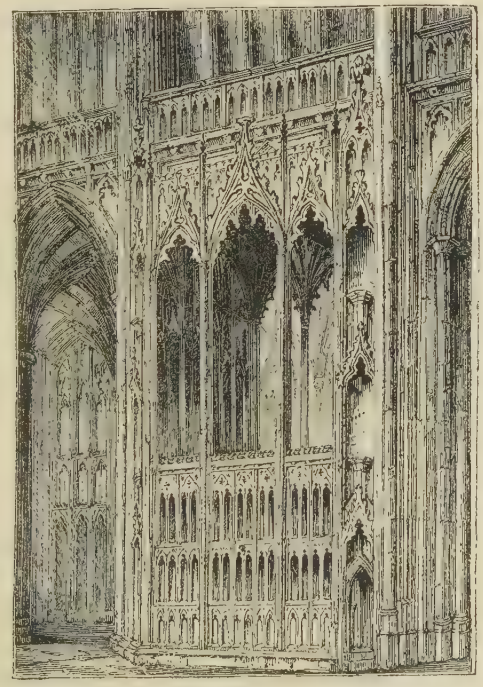
It is chiefly to him we owe the grand old church that looks vast and strong as the everlasting hills.

There is an amusing story about how he got wood for the work. He begged of the king, who said he might have as much timber as he could cut down in three days from the royal forest hard by. So the bishop sent for woodmen from far and near; and so hard did they work for three days, that when the king rode by on the fourth, he said, 'What's the matter with my eyes? Where's the forest?' And at first he would not forgive the good bishop, for he loved a forest dearly, and there was scarcely a tree to be seen. The bishop prospered in his work, and many gifts were sent to adorn it, and it grew more and more beautiful every year.

But Rufus, the son of the Conqueror, cared for little but gold and pleasure, and he robbed the beautiful church, which broke Bishop Walkelyn's heart. Nobody grieved when the dead body of this worthless king was drawn into the city on a charcoal-burner's cart from the New Forest, where he had been killed by a chance arrow.

The days of his brother, the first King Henry, were grand days for Winchester. It had palaces, and castles, and abbeys, and nearly a hundred churches, and was frequented by all the great nobles of the land; but in the long Civil War between Stephen and Matilda, poor Winchester suffered. Half its wooden churches, besides many other buildings, were burnt down. At one time the Queen Maud was so pressed that she escaped from Winchester Castle in a coffin.

Happy days came for the city again under the good Bishop William of Wykeham, who was born at Wykeham, or Wickham, close by Fareham. He



WYKEHAM'S CHANTRY, WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL.

left Bishop Walkelyn's work standing, but adorned it afresh. His own beautiful tomb is to be seen there still, with a full-length figure of the bishop, and four queer little monks kneeling at his feet.

He had a curtain or screen of lace-work put up across part of the cathedral, the like of which is hardly to be seen anywhere in the world. You see the delicate patterns of the lace, and it hangs in pleasant folds, and yet it is not lace at all, but cunning fingers have carved it out of hard stone.

William of Wykeham did another good thing for Winchester. He built the college, which is still a famous school for the sons of gentlemen.

The New Forest is in the south-west corner of Hampshire; it is still a large forest, in which oak trees are grown to make our 'heart-of-oak' ships; but in Saxon days the trees grew thick, and the forest spread over much more of the country. There is a story that the district was covered with villages, which the Conqueror destroyed to make himself a chace.

SUSSEX.

I.—THE RAPES OF SUSSEX.

SUSSEX, stretching from east to west, between Kent and Hants, has been compared to a long narrow man. It has a long reach of coast, forming a curve between Beachy Head and Selsea Bill.

No other county is divided in the same way as Sussex. It is parted into six strips, going right through the county from north to south. Each strip has its own bit of sea-coast, and each had its own fortress near the coast, partly to defend it against foreign foes, but chiefly to subdue the people of the land, should they rise against their conquerors.

For these divisions, called *Rapes*, date from the time when William, Duke of Normandy, took England from its lawful king, the Saxon Harold. He pretended it was the dying wish of Edward the Confessor that he should have the crown of England; so, to take possession, he and his people sailed across from Normandy in six hundred ships, and landed at Pevensey Bay.

The duke himself was the last to land ; and, as he stepped on shore, his foot slipt, and he fell forward on his face. But while the superstitious Norman soldiers muttered, 'A bad sign,' the duke clutched two handfuls of earth, and cried, 'I have seized the land with my two hands, and as much as there is of it is ours.'

Pevensey had a good harbour then, though it is now choked with sand. It is still a cinque port in name, and it has the ruins of a Norman castle, built, most likely, where an old Roman castle had stood before.

A march of seven miles brought the Normans to Hastings, a pleasant bathing-place now, with the ruins of an old castle on the cliff. Perhaps the town of the Saxon Hæstingas climbed up the same narrow valley between the hills, which the old part of Hastings still occupies.

William was in England a fortnight before a battle took place. Harold was away fighting the battle of Stamford Bridge, in Yorkshire, against his own brother and the King of Norway. After that victory, news came to the king that the Norman was in the land, and he and his men, spent already with fighting, came by hasty marches to the spot, since known as Battle, where they encamped.

This was the only pass, near Pevensey, by which Duke William and his men could have got any further into England. To the east of Hastings were marshes and woods ; to the west, a great forest, which filled the whole county of Sussex, and the only way they

could take was across the ridge which runs from Fairlight, close to Hastings, to Battle.

The Normans came to within a mile of the Saxon camp; and a night was passed, by the Normans in prayer, by the Saxons in feasting—at least so the Normans say.

The Saxon army occupied the best position, and at first it seemed as if they would conquer; but a body of the Normans pretended to fly; the Saxons rushed after them, and many Normans and Saxons fell together into a ditch—all of which threw the Saxons into some confusion.

Hitherto Norman arrows had not taken much effect. Now William bade his archers shoot up into the air, when one arrow, descending, pierced Harold's eye. The battle turned in favour of the Normans. Twenty knights bound themselves by a vow to carry off the Saxon standard. They succeeded. Harold himself was slain, and the battle was lost. The Saxons fought on until the evening, and then those who were left escaped to the great forest.

The battle had lasted the whole day, and at its close William *the Conqueror* supped for the first time—supped and slept on the very spot where Harold had fallen, on the 16th day of October, 1066. Here, too, he raised a great abbey, according to his vow; but there are few traces of it left.

'The Normans were a hard people. Whenever they conquered, and did conquer outright, they went to work like plunderers, dividing the country by measurement—by the *rope*, as it was termed—mea-

suring out the land amongst themselves. This is the process they carried into effect in Sussex, which is divided into six *rapes*.'

East Sussex contains the rapes of Hastings, Pevensey, and Lewes; West Sussex, those of Bramber, Arundel, and Chichester.

II.—THE DOWNS AND THE SEA-BOARD.

The South Downs enter Sussex out of Hampshire, and extend for fifty-three miles, getting nearer and nearer to the coast, until they end in Beachy Head, a grand chalk headland, from which the coast of France may be seen on a clear day. Very beautiful the Downs are: not lofty mountains by any means; few of them are more than 800 feet high; but their free, sweeping lines, passing away into the far distance, their soft curves, and the ever-changing cloud-shadows which glide over them, fill the mind with a sense of rest and pleasure.

Here and there they are hatted with trees—curious round clumps on the very summits; but these hardly add to their beauty: the graceful swell of the hills is enough in itself to please the eye. Sometimes villages nestle in the *deans* or hollows; sometimes they are filled with woods, which climb the hill-sides. Huge old hawthorns, one mass of white blossom in the spring, are dotted about on the slopes, and higher up are stunted juniper bushes. 'Fairy rings' are to be found everywhere; for the fairies, or, as the country folk call them, 'the Pharisees,' are fond of

BEACHY HEAD. P. 376.

the Downs, which shows them to be little persons of excellent taste. Perhaps they, too, like to feel the free air of the Downs in their faces, and the soft, springy turf under their tiny feet, making them laugh, and dance, and shout, and sing for joy, as the children of the towns do when they get a day on the breezy Downs.

And there are barrows on the Downs, where the Britons of the old, old days, were buried. And there are camps on the Downs where the Roman soldiers were stationed, so that they might keep a look-out over the valleys below and the sea beyond. These camps are raised rings of earthwork on the hill-tops, grass-grown now like the rest. High Down Hill and Cissbury, both near Worthing, are the two most famous camps, and in both of these Roman arms, and jewels, coins and vases, and other remains, have been found. And more, there are many sheep upon the Downs, which make the famous Southdown mutton, which helps to make the blue-eyed, fair-haired Sussex children, and men and women.

The Downs stretch, like a friendly, loving arm, round the towns and villages of the sea-board, sheltering them from the cold north wind. Perhaps that is why there are so many pleasure-places on this coast, which is mostly flat and shingly. There is Brighton, the 'Queen of Watering-places,' a great big town, very bright in the sunshine, with many handsome houses, and two piers, and delightful shops, full of dolls, and toys, and gay ornaments, and dresses. Worthing is something like Brighton, but much

smaller and quieter. Bognor and Littlehampton are still smaller bathing-places. Littlehampton, on the River Arun, is also a port, protected by Arundel Castle, which rises on a hill behind it.

The Castle, with its old Norman keep, stands in a pleasant park, and is the seat of the Duke of Norfolk. It has been three times besieged: once by Stephen, when Queen Matilda had taken refuge here with her stepmother, who bravely refused to give her up. Stephen, however, took the castle, and Matilda fled to Bristol. The town of Arundel is just a steep street leading up to the castle.

Shoreham, upon the River Adur, with Bramber Castle behind it, is a rather busy seaport town. Newhaven, also, has a harbour, and packets sail between it and Dieppe: it stands upon the Ouse, and is backed by the castle of Lewes, a few miles higher up the river.

III.—THE BATTLE OF LEWES.

Lewes, with its old Norman castle, covers the side of a steep hill, in the very heart of the South Downs, at the foot of which is the Priory of St. Pancras. There is little left of this once large and stately priory, where Henry III. held mad revel the night before the battle of Lewes. He was a foolish, selfish king, who cared for little but his own pleasure; and he had incensed his barons by not keeping the Great Charter which they had wrung from his father.

The barons and their followers placed themselves under the brave Simon de Montfort. The king and

his son, Prince Edward, assembled an army, marched into Lewes, and took up their quarters in the Castle and the Priory. Early on a May morning in 1264, the barons' army climbed the downs, and marched along the ridge until they came within sight of the Priory. There Simon addressed his men ; and they cast themselves flat on the turf, stretching out their arms in the form of a cross, and prayed God to give them the victory.

The hill they were upon has since been called Mount Harry, in memory of the king, who was defeated there. From the highest point of Mount Harry three ridges stretch down towards Lewes, with deep hollows between them, and the barons' army, in three divisions, marched along these ridges. The king's army, also in three divisions, came forward to meet them.

The troops under Prince Edward defeated one wing of the barons' army, and he and his men chased the defeated party over the Downs for four hours. But when he returned, thinking the victory was with his friends, he found that the rest of the royal army had been routed by the barons : he and his father fled for refuge to the Priory. Thus the close of the day saw the royal army scattered, and Prince Edward given as a hostage to the barons.

IV.—THE ANCIENT CITY.

Chichester owes its name to the Saxon Cissa, who, with his father, Ella, landed at a little opening near the city. They and their men fought their way for-

ward, until, in the end, they were able to set up the kingdom of the South Saxons, or Sussex.

The Saxons found here the Roman city of Regnum, which lies buried beneath the present Chichester; and coins, and urns, and bits of beautiful pavement, are occasionally turned up. One very interesting fragment was found in North Street. It is a stone slab, which has the names of Claudia and Pudens upon it; and it is supposed for many reasons, that these are the Claudia and Pudens St. Paul mentions in his second Epistle to Timothy.

Like most cathedral towns, Chichester is very quiet; it has four straight streets, which meet at the market-cross; and parts of the old walls remain, a pleasant walk from which the red roofs and gardens of the city may be seen. Chichester stands upon quite flat ground, and the cathedral is the only striking object which rises between the Downs and the sea.

The city owes its cathedral, or great part of it, to the Normans, as may be seen by the round shape of many of the arches. The campanile, or bell-tower, stands by itself, apart from the church.

There are many pleasant walks about Chichester: one of these is to Goodwood, a beautiful park among the Downs belonging to the Duke of Richmond, where the Goodwood races are held.

Bosham lies a little to the south of the city on the low marshy shores of an inlet called Chichester Harbour: a better landing-place once, for it was from here Harold sailed when he went to visit the treacherous Duke of Normandy; and perhaps the church is the same old church in which he said his prayers

before starting. Harold had a house at Bosham, and all the lands about belonged to him, and, before him, to his father, Earl Godwin.

NAVE OF CHICHESTER CATHEDRAL.

Sussex had its cathedral before the Normans came. In the old Saxon days, near the end of the seventh century, Wilfred of York was shipwrecked upon Selsea—'the seals' island.' He found the South Saxons still worshipping Odin and Thor, though the

king and queen were Christians. There was a great famine in the land, and the people were chaining themselves together in companies of thirty or forty to end their misery by throwing themselves into the sea. Wilfred taught them how to fish : they had little nets with which they caught eels in the brooks, but they knew nothing about the good food which was to be had out of the sea. So he taught them to join their little nets, and make a great one, with which they drew much fish to land. Then Wilfred taught the people, and they were baptized. On the day of the baptism rain fell; the corn grew again, and the famine ceased.

Wilfred stayed among the South Saxons, and founded a monastery; a cathedral was built upon Selsea, and he became the first bishop. But both cathedral and monastery have been long under the sea, which is gaining rapidly on this part of the coast.

V.—THE WEALD.

The whole of Sussex, except the Downs and the bit of country between them and the sea, was, at one time, covered with a great forest, which reached into Hampshire on one side, and into Kent on the other. This district is still called the Weald, the Saxon name for a forest. The forest has disappeared, but it is still a woody country, with clumps of trees on its low hills, and woods in the hollows. The Weald lies between the two chains of chalk hills, the North Downs of Surrey and the South Downs. It has a strange history, for though shut in in the chalk country, it is

not chalk itself. Geologists think that the Weald was once like the Down district, but that there came a great heaving of the earth which broke up the chalk, and that a strong current of water flowed through the long valley and carried away the fragments; and this is why, they say, the slopes of the hills turned towards the Weald have steep faces like sea-cliffs. But all this happened in days long before there were men upon the earth; when the Weald was peopled with huge reptiles, for which there would be no room in our busy world.

Sussex is a quiet county now, with never a factory to be seen; little but waving corn-fields and wide sheep-farms. But, not much more than a century ago, the Weald was noisy with the sound of many hammers, and black with furnace smoke. There is much iron in Sussex, and, until the use of coal was discovered, the trees of the forest were cut down to feed the furnaces in which the iron was smelted; and rural Sussex was then the 'black country' of England. When the coal-pits came to be worked, the Sussex iron was left to lie in its earthy bed; for iron is usually found with coal, and it costs much less to smelt the ore with coal than with wood. The highest and prettiest part of the Weald, reaching from Hastings to beyond Horsham, produced the most iron. None of the rivers of Sussex flow through this long valley from west to east; they are all short, and flow across the Weald from north to south, making their way to the sea between the Downs, which do not form a water-parting, or *water-shed*.

KENT.

I.—THE ROMANS IN KENT.

KENT has always been more closely connected with foreign lands than any other county. With the Thames estuary on one side, and the sea on two sides, it offers an inviting landing-place; and it is the friendly foot of England which stretches out towards the Continent. Suppose a bridge could be thrown across between Dover and Calais, a man might easily walk the twenty-one miles which divide us from a people who speak a foreign tongue.

Englishman have not always thought it a good thing to be so near France. For centuries the two countries were very jealous of each other; and the ports of Kent were fortified with strong castles, able to defy the Frenchman should he appear.

The first invaders came into Kent in days when it had no fortresses, when Julius Cæsar left his wars in Gaul to subdue for the Romans the little-known island of Britain.

The Britons in their war-chariots swarmed upon the cliffs, and watched the Roman galleys across the

straits, until they could hear the steady beat of their oars. The Romans made for Deal. Brave though they were, the half-clothed Britons with their rude weapons and undisciplined forces, retreated before the Roman soldiers, and Cæsar nominally took Britain for Rome, in the year 55 before Christ.

It was not, however, until nearly one hundred years after this that the Romans were able to take full possession of Britain. Towards the end of the first century they came in numbers and settled in the island, bringing with them all the comforts and luxuries of their Roman homes. Kent is full of the remains of what were once pleasant Roman villas, especially along the Watling Street, the great Roman road which goes from Dover to Canterbury, and thence on to London. Watling Street remained the highway of Kent until the days of the South Eastern Railway.

But stronger works than these remain in Kent as evidences of the Roman occupation. Another race, a brave, sea-going people, who lived on the shores of the North Sea, cast covetous eyes upon Britain. They swooped from their pirate ships upon the unprotected coasts, took off what they could carry, and burnt what they could destroy. So the Romans built strong castles here and there along the Kentish coast, and north of it, as far as Yarmouth, and along the south coast as far as Portsmouth; and over these castles and the soldiers which manned them, they set a 'Count of the Saxon shore,' whose business it was to protect the people from these new invaders.

The most famous of these were Reculver and Richborough, at the two ends of the Wantsome, a broad sea-channel, which once divided the Isle of Thanet from the rest of Kent. The Wantsome has disappeared now, and there is low marshy land in its place, through which the river Stour flows. The ruins of Richborough still remain, vast walls, and traces of towers with solid masonry eight feet thick. Fragments of pillars in fine white marble have also been found.

II.—THE SAXONS IN KENT.

Rome called away her soldiers in 411 A.D., and the Britons were too feeble to take care of their own. Enemies harassed them from the north, and they called to their aid their former foes. The Saxon pirates were cruising off the coast under the brothers Hengist and Horsa; and the Britons offered them Thanet and other pay, if they would rid the land of the northern foe. 'No spot in Britain can be so sacred to Englishmen as that which first felt the tread of English feet.' For the Britons and the Romans are nothing to us; these pirate warriors were the first Englishmen, and from them the great English nation has descended. They landed at Ebbsfleet. 'There is little to catch the eye in Ebbsfleet itself, a mere lift of higher ground with a few grey cottages dotted over it, cut off now-a-days from the sea by a reclaimed meadow and a sea-wall. But, taken as a whole, the scene has a wild beauty of

its own. To the right the white curve of Ramsgate cliffs looks down on Pegwell Bay; far away to the left, rises the dim cliff-line of Deal.'

The Picts, the northern foe, subdued, the Saxons were minded to take for themselves the pleasant land whose people were not strong enough to take care of it. They swarmed across the Channel and into Thanet; they crossed the Wantsome by a dangerous ford, in the teeth of the two great fortresses of Richborough and Reculver, took possession of the road, and made towards London. At Rochester they may have turned south, marching between the Medway and the hills which shut in its valley on the east. They must have thus passed through the great burying-place of the ancient people, a spot which is still marked by Kit's Cotty House, a cromlech, or monument, consisting of a great flat stone supported on three upright blocks, which stands upon a hill overlooking Aylesford.

Here the great fight took place which gave Kent to the English. We know 'nothing of the rush that must have carried the ford, or of the fight that went struggling up through the village;' we only know that Horsa fell, and that a terrible massacre of the Britons followed the victory. 'The priests were slain at the altar, the churches fired, the peasants driven by the flames to fling themselves on a ring of pitiless steel.'

Another defeat took place at Crayford, and the Britons 'forsook Kentland, and fled with much fear to London.'

III.—THE MISSIONARIES.

More than a century had passed, and the Saxon king, Ethelbert, ruled in Kent. He had married Bertha, a Christian lady, and had given her the old church of St. Martin, still in Canterbury; but he and his people served their old gods. The heart of Gregory, a good bishop of Rome, had been touched by the sight of some fair-faced, golden-haired, Saxon boys, who stood bound in the market-place of Rome to be sold as slaves. He longed to make angels of these *Angles*, so named from Angeln, the place whence their people had come to conquer Britain. So he sent Augustine and forty monks to preach the Gospel in Kent.

Augustine did not much like the mission; he feared the Saxons as fierce pagans, who would surely fall upon and kill his company. However, the missionaries came, and 'landed in 597 on the very spot where Hengist had landed more than a century before in the Isle of Thanet; and the king received them sitting in the open air, on the chalk-down above Minster. He listened to the long sermon of Augustine, and said, "Your words are fair, but they are new."' He would not yet forsake the gods of his fathers, but promised to protect the monks, who entered Canterbury singing a litany.

A year passed before Ethelbert would receive the new faith; then the kingdom followed the king, and 'thousands of the Kentish men crowded to baptism in the Swale.'

Thanet, blessed since Augustine set foot on it, so that 'no snake or rat could live within its bounds,' is now covered with waving corn-fields. Ramsgate, Broadstairs, and Margate, all upon the island, are three favourite watering-places with the Londoners.

IV.—THE NORMANS AND THE CINQUE PORTS.

About five centuries later, the Normans came from northern France, under their bold Duke William, and dispossessed the Saxons for a time.

They seized upon the strong places, and all the coast from Thanet to Hastings in Sussex, was placed under the control of the 'Cinque Ports' as they were called, though there were more than five of them. The business of these ports was to furnish fifty-seven ships whenever the king should want them; and for this service they had many privileges. The freemen of the ports were all called barons, and eleven of these carried a canopy over the king and queen at every coronation. The Cinque Ports in Kent were Romney, Hythe, Sandwich, and Dover, with its 'limb,' Folkestone. Only Dover is still a port; the other harbours are choked with sand. Folkestone is a pleasant watering-place, built upon many chalk-hills; and Dover with its castle on the cliff,—

'The white chalk cliffs of Dover,'

is a bustling town and packet-station.

Before the Normans came, Kent was governed by the great Saxon earl, Godwin, whose land stretched away, so the story goes, six miles beyond the present

coast, between the two Forelands; but the sea rose high and flooded his lands, and all that remains of the earl's domain is the treacherous 'Goodwin Sands,' a line of sand-hills nine miles long, which have caused the wreck of many a brave ship. In one great storm in 1704, thirteen men-of-war were lost here.

Light-boats are kept afloat at the sands, and rockets are thrown up when a vessel has struck, and the boatmen of the coast, *hovellers*, they are called, pull out to the sinking ship.

Dangerous as these sand-hills are, they serve a purpose. They act as a natural breakwater, and the Downs—the channel between them and the coast—is the largest and safest harbour in the world, where the water is always smooth, however stormy it may be without. It is most likely that the Goodwin Sands were there long before Earl Godwin's time.

The 'white walls' of England, the chalk cliffs in which the Downs end, stretch from the North Foreland to Folkestone, except for a bit of low, marshy coast, between Walmer and the Isle of Thanet.

The name 'Downs' comes from a Saxon word, meaning a hill; and here means, not the water shut in by the sand-*hills* or Downs; but the broad band of round, swelling chalk-hills, with their short, green turf, dotted about with sheep, which stretches through the county from Surrey to the east coast—the north Downs.

A fine view of the cliffs, and of the breakers which mark the Goodwin sands, is to be had from the beach upon which Walmer Castle stands; a castle sacred to the memory of our great hero. For here the Duke of

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Wellington spent his last years; here he was to be seen taking his early walk on the ramparts every morning at six o'clock; and here is the simple, soldier-like room where he died (1852), a room with a hard, narrow bed, and little furniture, which served him as both study and bed-room. A little ivory figure of Napoleon, the great enemy whom he conquered for England, was one of the few ornaments of his room.

V.—THE CANTERBURY PILGRIMS.

The good king Ethelbert, when he became a Christian, could not do too much for Christ; he gave up his Canterbury palace to the monks, and went himself to live in Reculver Castle.

Canterbury became the chief church in all England, and Augustine, the chief clergyman or archbishop. In time a cathedral was built, and many archbishops followed Augustine, and they were all *Primates* or chiefs of all the clergy in England.

These Primates were great and powerful men. Some of them loved and helped the English people, and some did not; but because Augustine and his monks came from Rome in the first place, they were nearly all more obedient to the Pope of Rome than to the King of England. This state of things was often very trying to the king, as well as bad for the country; and Henry II. endeavoured to end it by making Thomas à Becket, a friend of his own, primate of all England.

But no sooner had Becket become primate, than

he was more rebellious to the king than any that had gone before him. Henry, at last, tried beyond all patience, said, 'Have I none that will rid me of this pestilent priest?'

Four knights heard, who never rested till they stood within Becket's own chamber in his Canterbury Palace. A long and angry talk followed; the knights accusing Becket, and he rebuking them. Then the monks, fearing for his life, prayed the archbishop to 'take sanctuary' in the church; for in those days the life of any man, even a murderer, was safe, if he once got within the walls of certain churches. The monks were filled with fear; Becket was calm, and would not be persuaded to move, until they heard the bell tolling for vespers. Then he moved to perform the service; the monks 'in all the hasty agony of terror, half drew, half carried him through a private chamber,' he, trying to go as usual with solemn state into the church. The knights had been absent for a few minutes getting their arms. No sooner was the service begun than 'the din of armed men was ringing in the cloister.'

The archbishop might easily have hidden, but refused to do so, and would not allow the doors of the church to be closed. 'Through the open door of the cloister came rushing in the four, fully armed, some with axes in their hands, with two or three wild followers, through the dim and bewildering twilight. The knights shouted aloud, "Where is the traitor?" No answer came back. "Where is the archbishop?" "Behold me; no traitor, but a priest of God!" They strove to seize him and to drag him forth from the

church. He clung to the pillar. In the struggle he dashed De Tracy on the pavement. A sword struck Becket. He received it kneeling: "Lord, receive my spirit!" Blow followed blow till all had wreaked their vengeance; and at last, a renegade priest, who followed the knights, set his heel upon his neck and crushed out the blood and brains. The mangled body was left on the pavement. The knights escaped, and the frightened monks drew near to perform the last offices. They broke into a rapture of wonder and delight on discovering not merely that his whole body was swathed in the coarsest sackcloth, but that his lower garments were swarming with vermin.' From that moment miracles began.

The people who had thought him proud and obstinate before, called him a holy martyr when they heard of the sackcloth. The Pope decreed that he was a saint. The king walked three miles barefoot over rough stones to do penance at his tomb, where he allowed the monks to scourge him. (1170.)

And now began the pilgrimages. People who were sick, people who were sad, people who had sinned, all people who hoped to go to heaven thought a visit to the shrine of the saint would help them. Kings and peasants, priests and soldiers, met there; and everybody brought his offering, generally the most precious thing he had; and everybody climbed upon his bare knees up the steep flight of steps which led to the shrine. The marks made by the knees of many pilgrims may be seen in the stone to this day.

For nearly four hundred years this went on; and Canterbury was a rich and busy city, with long trains

of pilgrims constantly coming and going. Chaucer, the first of our great poets, has left us a book of *Canterbury Tales;* tales told by one and another of a band of pilgrims to beguile the way from an inn in London to the saint's shrine.

At last another Henry, the eighth of his name, did what Henry II. failed to do. He ruled that the English clergy should obey nobody but the English king; also, that no more pilgrimages should be made to the shrines of saints, for that the bones of a dead saint could in no way help a living man. Wherefore he stripped these shrines. He had all the gold and jewels which had been offered to Saint Thomas of Canterbury carried away in two great chests, each of which it took eight men to lift.

Little remains of St. Thomas in Canterbury Minster, save the pavement upon which he fell, and the steps worn by the knees of the pilgrims.

Canterbury, whose archbishop is still the primate of England, is an ancient city, with gable ends here and there, and projecting stories. The cathedral stands out from a flat country, grandly, as some natural mass of rock or mountain: and, within, the pillars rise as a forest of stone, whose branches bear up the roof. But we have no space to tell of all the beauties of the cathedral, nor of the memories and monuments, dear to English people, which it holds.

VI.—THE THAMES MOUTH.

Going by the Watling Street from Canterbury to London, we come to the river Swale at Faversham.

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where, upon one Christmas Day, Augustine baptized 10,000 hardy men of Kent. The mouth of the Swale divides the Isle of Sheppey from the mainland; an island which rises in the centre, and has some trees, but is so low and swampy about the coast, that the people of Sheerness say, when the world was made Sheppey was never finished. The truth is, the cliffs are wearing away so fast, that the whole island will probably have disappeared in fifty years more. Sheerness is the chief place on the island; it has a very fine dockyard, in which ships of war are built and repaired.

Sheerness commands the mouth of the Medway, too. A desolate spot, for the estuary is getting choked with mud, and the river overflows its banks, and makes hundreds of dreary little islands, useless to anybody, separated by ditches and creeks.

Chatham; a little higher up the river, hardly escapes the water. It also has a large dockyard, where a shameful thing once happened; no less than the burning of some of our English ships of war, in their own place, by a Dutch fleet, 1667. Chatham is just a long, dirty street, by the river, full of Jews and soldiers. Rochester joins Chatham, and Strood joins it, so that one street runs through the three, and they make one large town. Rochester has an old cathedral.

We may go on by the Watling Street to Gravesend, a good-sized town, as far as which the Lord Mayor and Aldermen used to come in their gorgeous dresses and gaily-decked boats, to meet any distinguished stranger on the way to London. Here we might

take the steamboat, and go up the river to Woolwich, where there is a third dockyard, and many interesting sights—the Anchor Forge, where you may hear the great anchors beaten into shape, and the Giant Shears, which mast and dismast vessels in a wonderful way; and the Steam Engine Factory, with its clanging hammers at work upon the largest engines.

Still further up the river is Greenwich, with its beautiful hospital, once a royal palace, where Elizabeth was born, and in the park behind which she loved to walk. It was here that Raleigh saved the Queen from the mud; and from the windows of the palace she would wave her hand to her beloved 'sea-dogs' as they sailed away to fight her battles, or to discover new lands for their mistress. It was in Greenwich Palace, too, that her gentle brother, Edward VI., died. The palace was given by a later queen to be a home for old or disabled seamen; but it has been ascertained lately that they would rather spend their pensions in their own homes.

At Greenwich is the Observatory, with its great time-ball, five feet across, which comes down every day at 1 p.m. as true as the sun; and all the ships in the river set their chronometers by it, and all the railway trains in the kingdom go by 'Greenwich time.'. There is a contrivance in the Observatory for showing the force of the wind, and another for measuring the quantity of rain that falls; and there is a chronometer-room, to which the London watchmakers send their best watches and clocks for trial.

HOP-PICKING IN KENT.

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VII.—CHERRIES AND HOPS

are the most famous productions of Kent. There is hardly a parish in Kent, except in the marshes, where there are not hop-grounds. And very pretty these hop-grounds are. The hop-vine, with its beautiful leaf, twines round a high pole, and these poles are set in thousands—whole forests of hops, with just room enough to pass between the rows. The precious part of the hop is the odorous flower, which is ready for 'picking' about the beginning of September. And the hop-picking *is* a business! The Kentish people cannot get through with it, so hosts of poor folk out of the London back streets—labourers, factory girls, costermongers, men, women, and children—come trooping along the highways to take their summer holiday in the hop-grounds; a healthful holiday too, for the scent of the hops is said to be very invigorating.

Where do all the pickers live? Just where they can—against walls, in old barns, anywhere where they can light a fire, and cook, eat, smoke, and sleep; and a noisy, riotous set they often are.

The picking is a busy scene. The cutter, with his 'hop-dog' (which has a hook on one side and a knife on the other), cuts the bine near the roots, then hooks up pole and bine and all, and lays it across the picker's bin, and then the picker, with rapid fingers, strips the bine of its flowers, but is careful not to gather any leaves.

When the hops have been picked, they are carried

to the 'oast-houses' to be dried—odd-looking, round houses, going off into a point at the top, capped with a big black cowl, a sort of chimney to let out the steam from the hops. There is a furnace on the ground-floor, and above it a drying-room, a circular floor of wire netting upon which the hops are spread to dry. It is very easy to spoil the hops in the drying, so a man watches and turns them day and night. When dried they are packed in *pockets*, and carried off to the London markets.

The best hop districts are about Ashford, and between Canterbury and Faversham, and also the country about Maidstone. Maidstone, on the Medway, is in the midst of a hop and corn-growing country. It has a corn-market, and is the chief town in West Kent. There are some large paper-mills near the town.

Though the delicious cherries of Kent are grown all over the county, the chief orchards are in the river valleys. The borders of the Thames, the Darent, and the Medway, in the early spring, are 'white with blossoming cherry-trees, as if just covered with lightest snow;' and then, when the cherries are ripe, such gatherings, such merry-meetings and cherry-eatings! Not that the people of Kent eat all their own cherries, though there is a story on record of one young woman who got through twenty pounds at one time, with an illness after of course. But most of the fruit goes to Covent Garden Market, and the waggons may be heard rumbling along all through the night to be at the market by four next morning.

The Medway valley, between Maidstone and

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Tunbridge, is known as 'the Garden of Eden,' 'a district of meadows, corn-fields, hop-gardens, and orchards of apples, pears, cherries, and filberts.' Looking over the river, you see hop-gardens and orchards two miles deep on the side of a gently rising ground.

Tunbridge, with its castle and old timbered houses, stands in a great, beautiful dale, with hop-grounds all about it, on the steep slopes and in the hollows of the hills. In the season the road to London is thronged with huge waggons laden with pockets of new hops, piled nearly as high as the houses they pass.

Penshurst Castle, with its grey walls, and turrets, and red roofs, is in the midst of a wide valley, not far from Tunbridge. It was the home of the noble Sydneys, where Sir Philip Sydney was brought up—the gentle knight whose queen, Elizabeth, spoke of him as 'the brightest jewel of her crown;' whose father, writing to Sir Philip's younger brother, says of him, 'He hath the most virtues that I ever found in any man;' the same gentle knight who, dying on the battle-field of Zutphen, gave the draught of water he was thirsting for to a soldier by his side, saying, 'He hath more need of it than I.'

Tunbridge Wells is about six miles south of Tunbridge, a pleasant watering-place among the hills, where visitors drink the waters of the iron springs.

VIII.—THE MARSHES.

Though Kent is the 'Garden' of England,' or at any rate one of the gardens, it is not all equally beautiful and fertile. The people divide it into three

parts. One district has 'health without wealth;' that is the country of the breezy Downs, the 'backbone of Kent,' stretching through the county from Surrey to the chalk cliffs of the coast. Another district has 'health and wealth;' that is the greater part of the county, especially the country about Canterbury, and the Medway valley between Maidstone and Tunbridge, in fact the healthful, hop-growing districts. The third district has 'wealth without health.' To this belong the marshes along the mouths of the Swale and Medway—rich enough, for the low, marshy lands produce deep rich grass, fine cattle pastures; but though cattle thrive, men suffer: low fever and ague are always abroad.

Romney Marsh, about eight miles wide and fourteen long, between Hythe and Dungeness, is such another aguish tract—a dreary spot shut off from the rest of the world, without trees or hills, nothing to be seen but green fields, dotted with cattle and crossed everywhere with dykes and water-courses.

Stretching from the Marsh, through West Kent and Sussex, is the Weald, with its low hills. The word 'weald' means wood or forest (Ang. Sax.), and there was once a thick forest here which reached as far as Hampshire. It is still a wooded district, the oak being the principal tree. The wooded tracts are often very beautiful, but are not always healthful, and parts of the Weald are among the wealthy, but not healthy, districts of Kent.

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